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AN

EXPOSITION

OF

THE APOCALYPSE.

BY DAVID N. LORD.



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INTRODUCTION.

I. THE INSPIRATION OF THE APOCALYPSE.

THE Apocalypse is more eminently marked than any other part of the sacred writings, by the peculiarities which distinguish the works of inspiration from those of men;—a truth and wisdom of thought, a suitableness to the attributes and prerogatives of God, a greatness and majesty, that could proceed only from the Omniscient.

I. These characteristics are seen in the annunciation of himself, which the Redeemer employed both in the first and the last vision, to raise the apostle to a sense of his deity. Like a shaft of lightning from a midnight cloud, shedding illumination over a landscape, and raising the forms and relations of its objects into distinctness, it flashes on us a gleam that reveals the ground within us on which the government of God is built, which is fully known only to him, and which men either fail to discover, or disown and wrap in darkness. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, First and Last, the Beginning and the End;”—embracing in himself therefore all duration, and antecedent all other existences; their creator then, owner and ruler; and therefore almighty, all-wise, and all-good;—the characteristics—self-existence, eternity, omnipotence, rectitude, and the relations of creator—scribed to him by the living creatures, chap. iv. 8, and that, on the one hand, are peculiar to him, and distinguish him above all others, alike from imaginary deities and from creatures; and that on the other, irresistibly impress the heart with the feeling of his rightful authority over it, and title to its homage. Our nature is such, that no one could hear an utterance like that from heaven, without an instinctive conviction that the Being whom it announces is God, and has the right of dominion. They are attributes and relations that, by the law of our constitution, awaken in us a sense of subordination and responsibility. The employment of that annunciation to raise the apostle to a perception of his divinity, bespeaks accordingly a knowledge of

man and of God, that is not only never seen in the uninspired, but is not equalled in the thoughts which the prophets themselves have uttered, in their addresses to the Deity. Great and beautiful as the conceptions they sometimes express are, above those of other minds, they are limited and faint compared to these. They are the thoughts of mortals, illumined indeed and exalted by the inspiring Spirit; but these are the utterance of the Self-existent himself, conscious of the attributes and relations that peculiarly distinguish him, and aware of our moral nature, and the instruments that most powerfully excite in us a sensibility to his rights.

So far are men from having realized that these are the relations that most intimately and indissolubly connect us with him, and the thoughts that have the strongest hold of our moral sensibilities, that whether heathen or christian, philosophers or theologians, they have almost without exception, looked in a wholly different direction for the grounds of right, and the most effective considerations to impress the conscience,—to the sense of pleasure, to self-love, to gratitude, to expedience, to general utility, to prevalent opinion, to custom, to the will of the magistrate; and when, in endeavoring to excite in their fellow-men a sense of duty, they have employed the considerations suggested by the Scriptures, it has often at least been without a perception of the grounds on which they were proceeding, and under the impulse of feeling, rather than the guidance of theory. The Redeemer, instead of descending to such inadequate and unsuitable means to raise a sense of his divinity, employs an instrument whose legitimacy our whole nature instantly acknowledges; proclaims his self-existence, eternity, omnipotence, and relations as creator and preserver, and builds on the foundation on which the fabric of his government rests, and is to rest throughout its everlasting years, and displays therein a perfection of intelligence and rectitude that belongs only to God.

A similar adaptation and greatness mark the expression which he employed in announcing himself to the apostle as the incarnate Word. "I am the First, and the Last, and the Living. I was dead, and I live for evermore, and have the keys of death and the grave;" conceptions that in vastness and sublimity immeasurably surpass any to which uninspired mortals ever ascended,—extreme and opposite characters and prerogatives, self-existence and mortality, captivity to death, and dominion over it and the bodies of the dead, that were never together predicable of any but Jesus Christ. Nothing in the whole circle of the ad-

dresses of God to us, is at a greater distance from the conceptions of mortals, exhibits more clearly his knowledge of our moral constitution, or displays a greater wisdom of adaptation, than the use of these thoughts to raise the prophet to a recognition of him as the incarnate Word.

II. A similar proof of its divine origin, is seen in the personal appearance of the Deity, in the opening and several of the subsequent visions.

There is an obvious necessity that God should appear in the visions as the Creator and Ruler of the universe; the rightful object of homage, and the author of the revelation: and the Redeemer also, both as the Lamb slain for men, and after his sacrifice, as the Almighty King accomplishing the great scheme of redemption. Yet it were inconsistent with their nature, to represent them by any thing drawn from the created universe. There is nothing among creatures presenting any analogy to the Selfexistent, the Eternal, the Almighty. To attempt a representation through them, were to degrade, not exalt our conceptions of him. The law of symbolization accordingly forbids his introduction by representatives. To meet therefore, on the one hand the necessity of exhibiting him as the author of the revelation, and yet not detract on the other from his dignity, analogy is laid aside, and he appears in his own person. A shape immeasurably transcending our loftiest conceptions of created grandeur, invested with the insignia of infinite power, knowledge and dominion, appears enthroned. Various orders and innumerable hosts of intelligences bending in his presence, recognise and worship him as the Selfexistent, the Creator and Ruler of all, and hymn the rightfulness, the wisdom and the benignity of his reign. In like manner the Redeemer appears in the first vision, in his human form glorified to dazzling majesty, with symbols of his peculiar character and office as the head of the church.

This expedient is marked by a loftiness and beauty of wisdom, wholly transcending the genius of mortals. Had there been no visible exhibition of God, it would have detracted greatly from the perfection of the revelation. The apostle would have been left, not indeed without a knowledge from whom the visions proceeded, but without that effulgence of demonstration which became the divine majesty, and which his necessities required. The concinnity of the spectacle would have disappeared. It would have been an apocalypse without a visible revealer; a series of divine acts, without a manifested deity. His appear-

ance gave the visions their proper relation. The dazzling splendor of his aspect, the annunciation of his attributes, the awful symbols of his supremacy, the homage of the universe, distinguished him from all other actors in the scene, and raised to vastness and intensity the apostle's conceptions of his distance from creatures.

Had he not appeared in person, but been represented by a created intelligence, it had been to neglect the care with which he ever guards his deity; to descend to the false conceptions of men, in place of exalting their thoughts of him to truth and dignity; and to stamp an imperfection on the revelation that would have bespoken it the work rather of human contrivance, than divine wisdom. It has been the disposition of men in all ages, however lofty their genius, to represent God and his attributes in the forms of creatures, and by fancied analogies. With what beauty his wisdom appears in this instance in avoiding all countenance to that tendency, and yet meeting at once the demands of our nature, and of his majesty.

III. There is a suitableness of the symbols to the agents and events they are employed to represent, that bespeaks them the work of a higher wisdom than that of man.

They give in all instances with great clearness and strength, a color of representation that accords with the beings and agencies which they foreshadow. They are chosen in conformity with a single, a simple, and however it has been overlooked, a most obvious law, which when understood, renders at least the species of agents and events which they denote, of easy discovery. When they deviate from that law, it is by the introduction, as in the instances already noticed, of the beings themselves to be exhibited, from the impossibility of finding an appropriate substitute. And they display the great characters of the agents and objects which they represent, with a sublime brevity, clearness and strength, that are seen only in delineations by the pencil of God.

There is thus a beautiful propriety, an impressive grandeur, in the exhibition of a gigantic angel, robed in a cloud, with an iris glory encircling his head, descending from the atmosphere, as a representative of illustrious men whom God commissions to proclaim anew the gospel to the world, and be the instruments of conducting multitudes from age to age to the knowledge and acceptance of salvation.

A monster brute formed by the union of the most characteristic parts of the principal ferocious beasts, is an apt emblem of

a vast combination in a government of savage and tyrannic men, wantonly slaughtering and devouring to satiate their lawless and cruel passions.

What other portent of terrific grandeur can be imagined so suited as a lasting eclipse or obliteration of the sun, to denote the fall from the pinnacle of glory of an ancient government, and the darkness, confusion and dismay with which such a catastrophe overwhelms a people deprived in an instant of the protection of law, robbed of rank, plundered of property, and exposed to the ruthless passions of brutal conquerors. Or what event in the natural world more fit than an earthquake agitating the surface of vast regions, and dashing down the fabrics of art, can be found to symbolize a great political revolution in which the whole structure of society is shaken with passion, all ordinary law suspended, ancient institutions overthrown, and an aspect of violence and disorder impressed on every scene.

An eminent appropriateness and adequacy thus mark all the symbols of the Apocalypse. They deviate in no instance from the most conspicuous propriety. They are never disproportioned in significance to the objects they are employed to represent.

IV. Its exhibition of the eternal Word as exalted to the administration of the universe, and the recognition by all orders of intelligences of his title on the ground of his work as Redeemer to reign, is a mark of its inspiration.

The views which it presents of his station and work as Redeemer, are in accordance with the representations of the other Scriptures. He appears in the first vision, and in the addresses to the Asiatic messengers, as the head of the church, holding the stars in his hand, walking amidst the candlesticks, chastening his offending people, rewarding the faithful, destroying his enemies;—in the second as receiving from the Father the volume of his designs to unfold them to the apostle, and in the following as executing them by his providence. His elevation thus to the throne of heaven, administration of the divine government through a vast succession of ages, and reception of the homage of the universe, is one of the most wonderful of his agencies as Redeemer, and doubtless one of the most essential to the perfection of his work. Whatever other reasons there may have been for that measure, it is apparent, that it gives birth to several most important results which would not have been otherwise attained; a demonstration on an infinite scale of his deity; a recognition of his deity and title to reign by the universe; an intimate relationship between him as the incarnate

Word, and all his intelligent subjects; and thence a manifestation to them of his work as Redeemer, and communication of the infinite aids to wisdom, rectitude and happiness which the knowledge of it is suited to yield. The Apocalypse exhibits this great feature of his work in a most impressive form; and it is a mark that it is a revelation from him. What a grandeur of design it displays! How suitable to the greatness of God! How adapted to the necessities of his kingdom! Into what an immeasurable significance it expands the work of redemption: and how it reconciles with his infinite dignity and wisdom, the condescension of the eternal Word to so humble a nature as ours, and the labors, the ignominies and the sufferings through which he purchased salvation! What an elevation it displays above the views which are usually entertained by men, who limit their thoughts of the influence of his work almost wholly to our race! And what a contrast it presents to the false and impious conceptions of it, which, when left without restraint, they adopt and maintain, as is shown in the symbolization of the apostate church!

V. The thoughts, purposes and actions which are ascribed to the Word, are such as befit his station as Redeemer and Ruler of the universe, and could never have proceeded from the unaided genius of man.

He proclaims his attributes and prerogatives as the Self-existent. He acts as intrusted with the assertion and support of the rights of God. He displays his purpose to maintain a government of spotless righteousness, and reward the obedient with the gifts of immortal life, and the incorrigible with eternal death. He exhibits an attention to all the actions of his people, and knowledge of their thoughts, of which none but the Omniscient is capable; and an awful justice towards sinners, that belongs only to a being of infinite intelligence and rectitude.

On the other hand he displays a majestic forbearance, tenderness and benignity toward his people. He stoops to their necessities; he supports them in their trials; he is the witness of all their obedience; he holds a crown of life in his hand to reward their fidelity. Of all the delineations of love that have ever been drawn, there is none that approaches in beauty and sublimity that presented in the Apocalypse, of the sentiments with which the Saviour regards those whom he is first to raise from death; chap. xiv. 1-6. They are youths, in the bloom and spotlessness of first maturity. They bear on their brows a

circlet on which his name, and the name of the Father are engraven. Their song is exhibited as marked by a significance and fraught with a homage which neither any others of the redeemed, nor the angelic hosts can equal. They are associates and companions of the Lamb, and follow him whithersoever he goes. He remembers none of their offences. Their fidelity is unquestioned. They are without fault before him. From what heart but his who loved them and washed them in his own blood, and made them kings and priests unto God, could expressions like those proceed! The patience, the tenderness, the condescension, the love displayed by parents towards their offending offspring, are always beautiful, and often rise to grandeur. But in their happiest forms and highest energies, they are only proportional to their limited nature and relations. The love of Christ has a greatness and sublimity of which the Infinite alone is capable.

The ascription to the Redeemer of thoughts and affections so suited to his complex nature, his station and agency, required a higher judgment than man's, and bespeaks it the work of the Omniscient Spirit. There is no task so difficult to even the greatest geniuses, as the conception of thoughts, affections, and actions appropriate to the Deity. The great poets have failed in none of their attempts so universally and conspicuously as in this. They have seldom risen, even in their addresses to the Supreme, to a becoming simplicity and sublimity of thought. The opposite natures, the infinite energy, the lofty suitableness both to his deity and his manhood, of the affections and actions ascribed in the Apocalypse to the Redeemer, form a picture of truth and beauty which none but the all-perfect Intelligence himself could have drawn.

VI. The system of administration through a vast period, fore-shown in the Apocalypse, is such as no uninspired mind could have anticipated from the Redeemer's exaltation to the throne of the universe.

Such is the permission of an extreme debasement and corruption of the church through a long tract of time; the continued allowance of idolatry over a great part of the globe; the rise and spread of new forms of false religion; the cruel domination over his people through ages of apostate powers; the slaughter of his faithful witnesses; his continuing to leave their dust to slumber in the ignominious ruin of the grave through a vast round of centuries; and his release of Satan from imprisonment after the millennium, and permission again to tempt the nations, and convert

the world into a scene of rebellion and misery. We can now indeed see that results spring from this procedure that are of the utmost importance to the understanding and vindication of the work of redemption itself, and serve to prepare the way for the measures of grace that are to follow through interminable ages. That man is truly such a being as the work of salvation assumes, is shown on a boundless scale ; his greater readiness to reject and pervert the grace of God than to accept it ; the inadequacy of secondary means to convert or restrain him ; the facility with which he yields to temptation ; the incorrigibility with which he perseveres in sin ; and the inextinguishable malice of Satan, whose obduracy no punishment can soften, whose thirst of evil no success in ruining immortal beings can satiate. But who, anterior to the commencement of this administration, could have deemed it would be chosen by the Son of God in preference to all others ; that after having, by his sacrifice, rendered it compatible with justice to save the race, he should continue generation after generation to leave a vast proportion to perish ; that instead of displaying his infinite power and delight to subdue his enemies to obedience, he should allow them to triumph over him ; that he should leave his faithful people to be trampled down and slaughtered by apostate powers arrogating his rights and usurping his throne ; and finally, that after having conquered the earth and converted it into a paradise of beauty, virtue, and bliss, and reigned over it in majesty through a vast circle of ages, he should again allow Satan to deface it with rebellion and death, and drag new millions down the abyss of hopeless ruin. These are measures which no human being, however exalted in intellect, could have deemed the most eligible. They are measures which no one, unless taught by the Spirit of inspiration, could have thought were even compatible with wisdom and benignity. They contradict the expectations of the church at the period when they were written, in place of according with them ; and reason in every age, instead of being able to discover their necessity, has been baffled by them and confounded. The prediction of a procedure so opposite to all that we should naturally expect, and to the faith and hope of the church at the time of its promulgation, could have emanated from no one but the Omniscient himself, who formed and executes the purposes which are here made known.

VII. The thoughts and sentiments ascribed to the redeemed and angelic hosts, are marked by a truth, a wisdom, and grandeur, immeasurably distant from the imperfect conceptions of men.

Thus they are exhibited as aware of the right of God to the homage of his creatures, from his self-existence, eternity, omnipotence, and work as creator; and as worshipping him on that ground. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come. Thou the Lord our God art worthy to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things. For thy will they were, and were created." This recognition and acknowledgment of that foundation of his rights is highly beautiful, as it is a response to the proclamation of his attributes and agency, addressed by him to the apostle and the churches, in which he exhibited them as the ground of his title and claim to their homage. It is eminently becoming those glorious beings, as it denotes an elevation immeasurably above the narrow and erroneous views of men, who have displayed in every age a singular inadvertence of these rights, and in vast multitudes, even amidst the light of revelation, entertained and taught the most adverse and unworthy theories; some openly denying that he has any merit of homage because of his deity and work as creator, and maintaining that the only worship to which he is entitled, is that of gratitude; and that his claim therefore has its foundation and its measure in the happiness which he bestows; and others asserting that his deity and agency as creator, so far from investing him with rights over his creatures, place him under obligation to them, and give them a title to claim from him the gift of the utmost happiness of which their natures render them capable;—a scheme which, degrading God to the condition of a subject, and exalting creatures to the throne, exhibits a government over them as impossible. And errors scarcely less absurd and portentous lie couched in all the great theories of obligation;—self-love, utility, benevolence, will, custom,—which have enjoyed through ages, and still enjoy a principal currency. But those august intelligences, many of whom have lived in his presence through innumerable years, whose thoughts are intermixed with no errors, and overclouded by no uncertainty, and who have risen to lofty views of his infinite greatness, and the significance of his relations, see in the clearest light, and feel with the profoundest sensibility, his title to reign because of his deity and work as creator and upholder, and yield him their homage for the reasons for which he claims it.

They appear in majestic beauty also in their celebration of the rectitude, wisdom, and benevolence of his government. The raptured sense which they display of the grandeur of those perfections, bespeaks a truth and largeness of understanding and sanctity of affection eminently befitting beings exalted to stations

in his presence, given to survey the vast spectacle of his sway over the worlds, and formed to find a happiness great in proportion to the strength of their nature in the contemplation and exercise of wisdom and virtue.

But they ascend to a still sublimer height in their ascriptions of rectitude and wisdom to him in the infliction of his wrath, and summons of the universe to joy and thanksgiving at the destruction of his enemies. What a strength of understanding such a chant of acquiescence in the eternal overthrow of innumerable myriads bespeaks ! What an energy of rectitude ; what a sense of the rights of God ; what a comprehension of his ways ; what views of the guilt of incorrigible sinners, and the necessity that they should be treated according to their deserts ! What a foresight of the influence of that great measure on the obedient universe ! The ascription to them of views and affections thus suiting their exalted stations, is the work manifestly of a higher intelligence than that of man, and can have proceeded from none but the all-comprehensive wisdom of the revealing Spirit.

VIII. There is a vastness and beauty in the designs foreshown in the Apocalypse, that not only transcends human contrivance, but which none of its numerous students, with all the aids which a large accomplishment furnishes, seem to have comprehended.

There is a greatness and wisdom of which none but the Infinite is capable, in the purpose of such an administration as that which has already been exercised through eighteen hundred years, in which men are still allowed to sin and perish on a vast scale, and a foundation thereby laid by the verification it presents of the grounds on which the work of redemption proceeds, for a safe and boundless exercise of power and grace towards the race through the innumerable ages that are to follow. Who but he whose intelligence is all-comprehensive, whose rectitude and benignity are equal to his omnipotence, and who builds to meet for eternity the necessities of a boundless kingdom, could have discerned the expediency, and had strength of wisdom to choose such a procedure. Men so far from having risen by their unassisted faculties to the perception of such a reason for that great measure, or learned it from the Scriptures, have resorted for solutions to the most distant and preposterous conjectures :—to a denial on the one hand of power to God to exert an effectual influence on the minds of creatures ; to an ascription to him on the other, of a preference that they should sin and perish rather than obey.

How majestic is the purpose to raise the redeemed from the

imperfection of our present nature, to a splendor of form, and strength and elevation of faculties, resembling the glorified humanity of the Redeemer, and fitting them to dwell in his presence and fulfil illustrious offices in his empire! How suitable to his perfections, and adapted to glorify him, the design to put an end at length to the reign of sin and misery on earth; to banish from it the disorders to which revolt has given birth, and convert it again into a paradise of beauty, rectitude, and bliss, that its adaptation to the wants of such a race as are made its tenants may be seen, and man's capability be shown, of the exalted wisdom, virtue, and happiness to which he was originally called!

What effulgent characters of wisdom mark the purpose of the Redeemer, by descending in visible majesty to the earth, and reigning over it through immeasurable periods, to exalt it into an intimacy and grandeur of relation to himself, proportional to the greatness of the measure by which he opened the way for its salvation! How consonant to the boundlessness of his understanding and benevolence, the design to continue the redemption of generation after generation without end, and thus furnish through eternal years a perpetually accumulating demonstration, how adequate to justify his interposition, the great objects are for which he stooped to incarnation and death! And how beautiful the grace, how sublime the wisdom of the purpose, to give his redeemed, raised in glory from the grave, to reside with him on the earth, fulfil majestic offices of love toward the unglorified church, and display in that manner the contrast of their rectitude, wisdom, and benevolence, to the fraud and malignity of Satan and his hosts! How immeasurably this vastness transcends the nothingness of men! How suitable to the boundless strength of his intellect, and infinite fervor of his benignity! How adapted to the instruction of the countless multitudes of moral creatures, whom he is to supply with materials of thought, and lead on from height to height in wisdom, virtue, and bliss, throughout the round of everlasting years!

IX. The agents and events foreshown in those predictions of the Apocalypse which have already been fulfilled, are such as none but the Omniscient could have foreseen.

To the foresight indeed of a single event, and especially a distant one in the agency of creatures, no being is adequate but the All-seeing. The foreknowledge of such an event, includes a knowledge also of the nature of the agent who is to exert it, the certainty of his existence, the conditions in which he is to act, the influences that are to prompt him, the object of the action,

its effects, and thence necessarily of the whole train of causes and effects, of agents and influences, that are to intervene from the period of the foreknowledge, to the occurrence of the event foreseen; and especially of the purpose of God to give existence to the physical causes and voluntary agents, and to allow the influences that belong to that train. But such a knowledge none manifestly but God himself can enjoy. The number of agents, causes, acts and effects that enter into such a succession, when the event is distant, must be such in multitude and complexity, as no created intellect, were the series revealed, could possibly grasp. How much more must the infinite complexity transcend the narrow limits of the human intellect, when the agents, actions and events foreshown are innumerable; and not only of our race, but of other orders of beings;—disembodied spirits, myriads of holy angels, the legions of the fallen; and through a vast succession of ages; and finally when the agencies and events foretold are such as had never been beheld, and as no experience or observation could render probable; as are many of the actors and events exhibited in the Apocalypse, that have beyond all rational disputation appeared on the theatre of the world; and are still accomplishing the agency and exerting the influences foreshown of them.

Such pre-eminently is the disruption of the western Roman empire into ten kingdoms, the subsequent rise among them of an eleventh, their cotemporaneous subsistence thence through a long tract of ages, and union and resemblance in such a degree, that notwithstanding their individuality and difference of language, manners, and policy, they are justly considered as still one empire, and their rulers represented by a single symbol. To one reasoning from the history of preceding empires, it might indeed have seemed probable that the Roman would at no distant period undergo a division into different kingdoms; but nothing in the nature of its territory or population could suggest ten, any more than any other as the number into which it was to be divided; nor could any thing in the history of earlier nations, suggest the possibility that such a number of cotemporaneous states, differing in language, laws, pursuits, and policy, and almost perpetually warring on each other, could yet so resemble each other in religion especially, and so unite in a common relation to an eleventh, as in an emphatic sense to constitute them one, and render it requisite to represent those who rule them by a single symbol. No such union or resemblance was ever seen in the ancient cotemporary governments.

Such is the rise of the eleventh government, first as an ecclesiastical power, next as a kingly, by the fall before it of a part of the ten kingdoms, and its subsistence through a long series of ages in that form, in intimate relations with the others, and the exertion over them of momentous influences.

And finally, such is the concession by the others to that eleventh kingdom of an ecclesiastical rule over them closely resembling in the rights it usurped, and the power it exerted, the impious assumptions, and tyrannic sway of the rulers themselves of those kingdoms. Nothing of that nature had before been seen in the history of the world. Nothing in the nature of men, or the laws of divine providence, could at the promulgation of the Apocalypse have suggested it to one contemplating the future, as probable or possible.

In the novelty then and singularity of these agents and events, the almost infinite multitude and complication of persons, causes, circumstances, influences, acts and results that enter into the series, and the consideration that at innumerable steps in the train, the absence, or variation of a single agent, such for example as a Charlemagne, a Gregory VII., an Innocent III., a Leo X., a Charles V., a Pius V., a Sixtus V., would have changed the whole result, we have a demonstration immense and overwhelming, of a knowledge to which the human intellect is wholly inadequate, and proof that it is the work of the Omniscient Spirit.

X. There are several things in the Apocalypse which it is incredible would have been introduced, had it been the contrivance of an uninspired person.

Such is the representation of a sharp two-edged sword proceeding from the mouth of the Saviour, in the first and in the nineteenth chapter. Eichhorn accordingly, who treated the work as the mere invention of the apostle to adorn and aggrandize some of the events that marked the early progress especially of Christianity, regarded this as an egregious violation of good taste.

Such is the scene in the fifth chapter, in which the apostle exhibits a mighty angel as crying with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book of God's purposes, and loose the seals thereof; and when no creature appeared to open it, represents himself as overwhelmed with disappointment and grief, under the apprehension that it must forever remain sealed. No one would deliberately contrive a scene, exhibiting himself as falling in that manner into the error of imagining that creatures can unfold the

boundless purposes of God to the church, and weeping under the mistake.

Who, following the suggestions of his unassisted judgment or fancy, would have introduced the silence of half an hour as the first consequence of opening the seventh seal? Its significance and propriety, are at least very far from being obvious, if one may judge from the perplexity it has given interpreters.

Of a like nature are the voices of the seven thunders, and the prohibition to write their prophecy. What imaginable motive could have prompted the introduction of such an incident, had the scene of which it is a part been, not truly symbolic of agents and actions, but the mere work of the writer's fancy? It has been generally thought to contribute nothing to the progress of the revelation, but rather merely to baffle excited curiosity, and embarrass the reader with a feeling of disappointment.

It is incredible also that the author, had he written the work without inspiration, and for the mere purpose of displaying his genius, would have represented himself as falling down to worship the interpreting angel. It were gratuitously to exhibit himself as betrayed into a species of that creature-homage which he represents as the characteristic of apostates, and debarring from the kingdom of the Redeemer.

XI. All the doctrines and sentiments of the Apocalypse are accordant with the other scriptures, and exhibit that elevation and grandeur which are peculiar to inspired writings.

Such eminently are the views which it displays of the majesty of God, his omnipotence, his omniscience, the sanctity of his rights, the inflexibleness of his justice, the subordination to him of the universe, the sacrifice and exaltation of Christ, the wonderfulness of his love, the aims of his providence, the nature and beauty of his designs, the characteristics of his redeemed people, the relations of his work to the intelligent universe, the grandeur of the results that are to mark its everlasting progress. It presents no inconsistency with the other parts of the sacred word. It sinks in no instance below the dignity of the subject of which it treats. It soars above every other work of inspiration, exhibits in each stroke effulgent proofs of its divine origin, and is worthy the all-perfect wisdom and benignity of the Deity. To suppose a work fraught in an unexampled degree with these lofty characters, can be the contrivance of mere art and fraud, were solecistical and monstrous in the extreme:—It were to ascribe to depravity the display of infinite rectitude, and the most majestic wisdom to weakness and folly.

XII. To these considerations, its immeasurable elevation above the uninspired writings of the period in which it appeared and the following ages, may be added as a further proof that it cannot have sprung from the unassisted powers of man.

Of all the ancient religious writings that have descended to us, there are none perhaps that exhibit a more deplorable contrast to the Apocalypse, than those which are usually ascribed to the apostolic fathers, with the exception of the letters of Clemens and Polycarp generally supposed to be genuine, which with little force of thought or elevation of views, have still the merit of simplicity and consistency with the gospel. After a large subtraction from the others of the errors and weaknesses with which they are marked, as the work, in the letters of Ignatius at least, of interpolators and forgers, not a trace appears in the remainder, of the truth, the largeness, the dignity, the harmony of thought that distinguish the Apocalypse. So far from it, they are among the weakest of human compositions, vague, confused, illogical, inflated, absurd, and often false and impious, the productions manifestly of feeble, vain, and ignorant minds, most unjust to religion and discreditable to the church.

II. RECEPTION OF THE APOCALYPSE BY THE CHURCH.

THE proofs of its inspiration thus graven on its whole structure, are corroborated by its reception in the church. It is expressly ascribed by the earliest ecclesiastical authors whose writings are of authority, to the apostle John, and said to have been acknowledged as his by others whose works have not come down to our age. Thus Papias who was a cotemporary and hearer of the apostle, is represented by Eusebius as having held, agreeably to chapter xx. 4. 5, that Christ is to reign on the earth a thousand years after the resurrection of the dead;¹ and by Andrew bishop of Cæsarea Cappadocia of the fifth century, to have given his testimony to its inspiration.² Justin, who suffered martyrdom in the year 163 or 164, and wrote his dialogue with Trypho according to Pagi in 139,³ received it as the work of John.⁴ Irenæus, whose birth is generally referred to the first quarter of the second century, and who lived to its close, exhibits the apostle John as its author, and represents it as revealed no long pe-

¹ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 39.

² Michaelis' Introd. N. Test. chap. 33.

³ Crit. in Baron, A. D. 148, No. 5.

⁴ Dial. cum Tryph. cap 81. Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. 18.

riod before, but almost in his own age, toward the end of the reign of Domitian,¹ which terminated September 18th, in the year 95 or 96.² Melito, bishop of Sardis in Lydia, who lived about the year 170, wrote a comment on it.³ It was quoted by Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, of the same period;⁴ and also by the churches of Vienne and Lyons in the year 177 in their epistle to the churches of Asia and Phrygia.⁵ It was recognised conspicuously by Clemens of Alexandria,⁶ and Tertullian who flourished at the close of the second century;⁷ and though questioned, or rejected by some few persons of the following age, on the ground of its style and predictions, not from a want of external testimony,⁸ it has ever since been held by the church as a part of the sacred canon.

III. THE APOCALYPSE NOT A POEM.

EICHORN regarded the Apocalypse as a poetic drama. It has no characteristic, however, that entitles it to be considered a poem. It is wholly without the rhythm and modulation which are the distinguishing elements of poetry. A composition can no more be a poem without measure and harmony, than a succession of sounds can be a tune, without bearing any musical relation to each other.

The exaltation of inanimate and inferior things into the rank of intelligences by personification, ascribing to them faculties, dispositions and agencies, as men, angels or demons, is a conspicuous characteristic of poetry. But the symbolizations of the Apocalypse are the converse of that figure. Instead of personifying faculties, elements, or other natural objects, it exhibits orders and successions of men, nations, and rulers, by unintelligent existences, as brutes, monsters, the earth, the sea, the air, mountains; and the agencies of such combinations of men, by those of storms, falling stars, earthquakes, and volcanoes. There are no two species of composition, therefore, more unlike. To call this symbolic representation a poem, is as incorrect as it were to apply that denomination to the hieroglyphs of an Egyptian obelisk, or to regard the pictorial illustrations of the scenery, actors and actions of a poem, as the poem itself.

¹ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. v. c. 8.

² Pagi refers his death to the year 96. Dr. Jarvis, *Introd. Hist. Church*, p. 322 to 95.

³ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. 26.

⁴ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. 24.

⁵ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. v. c. 1.

⁶ Stromat. lib. vi. p. 667. *Pædagog*, lib. ii. c. 12, p. 207.

⁷ *Adver. Marcionem*, lib. iii. c. 14. Lib. iv. c. 5. *De Præscrip. Hæret.* c. 33.

⁸ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. vii. c. 25. *Lardner's Credibility*, vol. v. chap. xxii.

The Apocalypse is almost wholly without the embellishments that are characteristic of poetry. There is no instance in it of personification. It has not in the symbolic parts a single metaphor, except in the titles of the Redeemer. It has but few comparisons, and those of the simplest kinds, as of the voice of the Son of God to a trumpet and the sound of many waters, his eyes to a flame of fire, his countenance to the sun, his hair to wool and snow, his feet to fine brass, the faintness with which the spectacle struck the apostle to death, and others of the like nature, chiefly in the letters to the churches, and in the fourth, ninth, and tenth chapters.

The Apocalypse is a description in prose of symbolic agents, actions and effects, exhibited in vision to the eye of the apostle, and the recital of voices he heard; and is no more entitled therefore to be denominated a poem, than a description in prose, or a pictorial representation is, of the figures on a triumphal arch, or the actors, actions and scenes of the Iliad or Paradise Lost.

The fancy of Mr. Stuart that the Apocalypse is an epopee, is a still greater error than that of Eichhorn, as it overlooks the representative character of its actors and actions. In a drama one set of persons acts in the place of another. But nothing of that nature is known in the epopee, which is historical simply, and is either related by the poet, or represented as recited by actors and spectators of the scenes which it describes. It never personates one set of agents by another even of the same species; and still more emphatically, never like the Apocalypse, exhibits agents of one class by those of another. There is no species of poetry to which the Apocalypse bears a less resemblance than the epopee.

These attempts to dignify it by appropriating to it titles of human works with which it has no affinity, are extremely misjudged. So far from illustrating or exalting, they obscure and degrade it; and instead of indicating superior intelligence and taste in their authors, bespeak an inacquaintance with the nature of poetry as well as of symbolization. They are fraught also with a denial of the miraculousness of the visions, and thence of their title to be regarded as the work of inspiration. Mr. Stuart as well as Eichhorn, treats the symbols, which he perpetually confounds with personifications, metaphors and similes, as the contrivance of the writer, and designed chiefly to give pleasure to the passions and fancies of his readers. But that is directly to contradict the apostle, and assume that he was guilty of a misrepresentation in the pretence that the symbols were exhibited to him in vision. No asseveration could be more false and deceptive, than that he be-

held the Son of God, as he is delineated in the first vision, and heard from him the utterances which are ascribed to him, if instead of beholding such a vision, it was the work of his mere fancy; while on the other hand if he beheld such a vision, no room existed without an equal violation of truth, for the introduction in the delineation of it, of any fanciful additions. But the apostle expressly asserts that that to which he gave his testimony in the Apocalypse, was that which he saw and heard; and so far from being the inventor of the symbols, and decorating them with their accompaniments for the purpose of gratifying the taste of his readers, he exhibits himself as unaware of their full design, and as needing and enjoying the aid of an angel to unfold the principle on which they are employed, and interpret their significance. To suppose him, therefore, guilty in these representations, of an attempt to betray his readers into the belief, that mere pictures drawn by his fancy, were the work of the Almighty, is to suppose him wholly devoid of reverence toward God, and truth toward men, and exhibit his pretence to inspiration as deceptive.

IV. THE LAWS OF SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION.

THE distinguishing characteristic of the Apocalypse is, that it foreshadows what it reveals, not by words, like ordinary prophecies, but by representative agents and phenomena exhibited to the senses of the apostle. A knowledge of the principle on which those signs are used, is indispensable therefore in order to their interpretation. To overlook or misconceive it, is as fatal to the interpreter, as a similar negligence or error were to the just construction of ordinary language. He would no more necessarily misjudge, who should regard written words, as signs of something else than the significant voices which they represent, than he errs in the solution of symbols, who misconceives the species of objects they are employed to denote.

What then is the principle of symbolization? What is the law by which one set of agents and phenomena, is used in the place of another, in making to the senses a mystical representation of the future? Are the signs chosen from the class of objects which they are employed to represent, and on the ground of a similarity of nature; or from another but in some respects a resembling class, and on the ground of analogy?—the question, the reader will soon perceive, on the decision of which, the whole interpretation turns. For the principle on which they are

used, is undoubtedly in all cases the same. If a victorious warrior be a representative of bodies and successions of conquering warriors ; if a civil magistrate be a symbol of a combination or series of civil magistrates of a similar character ;—then must an animal also be taken as a precursor of a herd and succession of similar animals ; and monster shapes like the locusts and horsemen of the fifth and sixth trumpets, and the seven-headed and two-horned wild beasts, be regarded as foreshowing the appearance on the theatre of the world, of races of similar monsters. Otherwise there can be no uniform law of symbolization, and thence no certainty of interpretation. It were as incompatible with a demonstrable meaning, that symbols should be used without any rule of relationship or significance ; as that sounds, or letters and written words, the representatives of sounds, should be used without any established and uniform meaning. As the letters of the alphabet, had they no fixed character either as consonants or vowels, and were no more marks of one set of vocal accents than another, could not serve as signs of the voice, nor be instruments of representing audible expressions of thought and feeling ; and as written words could form no intelligible language, had they no settled meaning, and sustained no uniform relations to each other, so neither can the symbols of prophecy, if the principle on which they proceed, be not invariably the same. To suppose their relationship to the objects which they represent is without any uniformity, is to suppose there is no clue whatever to their meaning. To assume that their relations in different cases are precisely the reverse of each other, is to assume that true and false constructions are equally probable. The principle of representation therefore,—the relation of the sign to the thing signified, is undoubtedly in all cases the same, not various and opposite ; and the rule of construction as universal, as certain, and as simple, as are the laws of the signs by which the voice is represented.

But that relation manifestly is not a similarity of nature. A wild beast is not a representative of a herd or succession of wild beasts of the same species. There are no seven-headed and ten-horned monsters in the forests or cultivated tracts of the Roman empire ; nor horses with lions' heads, and tails hung with a growth of serpents. A symbolic sea in like manner, is not a representative of a literal sea ; nor a fountain or river, of some real fountain or stream of the apocalyptic earth. It were as erroneous and absurd to impute to the symbols such a relationship in this instance, as in the former. It were to miscon-

ceive the nature of symbolization, as he would misconceive the nature of a simile, who should regard it as a comparison of a thing with itself, instead of some other object of an analogous nature—as a lion with a lion, a tempest with a tempest; instead of man or some other creature, in respect to courage with a lion, or passion with a whirlwind. It were entirely to set aside the mysteriousness of symbolization, and treat it as merely equivalent to a verbal description of the things which it denotes. If a fountain be the representative of a fountain, what enigma is there in the symbolization? What is the object of presenting it in vision? Why is not a verbal description as suitable a means of foreshowing it, as a visible exhibition? If the drunken sorceress borne on the wild beast, be a precursor of a succession of such sorceresses; what mystery is there in the sign? What veil is left on the meaning? What peculiar need is there of wisdom to its interpretation? But that that is not the relation of the sign to the thing signified, we know by the interpretation given of many of the symbols by the great Revealer himself, and the attending angels. A star we are told by the Redeemer, is a symbol of the messenger or minister of a church, not of a succession of stars; and a candlestick of a church itself, not of a multitude or series of candlesticks. A horn represents a succession of kings, and the drunken sorceress, a great combination of nationalized religious teachers and rulers. The ground of symbolization is indisputably therefore, not a similarity of nature, but analogy;—general resemblances by which objects of one species, may be employed to represent those of another. A combination of bloody and tyrannical rulers, is symbolized by a ferocious wild beast, because their temper and agency toward individuals, communities, and nations, is like that of a ravenous brute, that kills and devours inferior and harmless animals. A vast multitude united in a single community, or under one government, is represented by a sea, because of its resemblance to such a collection of waters, and relationship to inferior and tributary communities, like that of a sea to the fountains and streams that devolve into it; while lesser communities, and distant dependent tribes, are symbolized by streams and fountains, because of their analogous relations to some great central community toward which they tend. In like manner a volcanic mountain precipitated into the sea, projecting its burning elements over the waters, destroying the fish, and firing the ships, is employed to symbolize the intrusion into a great empire of a hostile nation, establishing a separate gov-

ernment, and sending out from its capital devastating expeditions into the neighboring territories.

The symbols of the Apocalypse, and of all the prophets, are accordingly taken in all cases, where the subject is of a nature to admit it, from objects or phenomena of a different class from those which they are employed to represent, but that present striking resemblances in their chief characteristics; and the fact that they are drawn from one department, whether of civil life, the animal kingdom, or the material universe, which may serve as a representative of another, is an infallible token that they are signs, not of things in that department, but of something analogous in some other sphere of the religious or civil world. Thus when symbols like the first four seals, are drawn from the military and civil chiefs of the Roman empire, they denote, not such actors and actions in that civil and military state, but analogous agents and agencies in some other body of men, embracing like that empire, all varieties of good and bad, and sustaining resembling relations to each other; and in those instances denote the ministers of the church. When like the first four trumpets, they are drawn from the material universe, they indicate analogous agents and events in the world of men; and in those instances in the Roman and neighboring civil and military empires. Babylon the metropolis of an idolatrous persecuting kingdom, is employed as a symbol of a resembling organization of apostate and persecuting teachers professing to be true ministers of God. A woman clothed in a robe of sunlight, crowned with stars, crying out in the endeavors of childbirth, and bearing one who should rule the nations, is a symbol of the church in fervent desire and successful endeavor that one of her offspring may be advanced to the throne of the empire, and give release from persecution. When the relation of the teachers and rulers of the nationalized church to the civil powers of the empire, during the twelve hundred and sixty days, is to be represented, a drunken sorceress is exhibited as borne by a monster wild beast, the symbol of the rulers of that empire. The woman clothed in sunlight, driven from society into a desert, is the emblem of the true people of God frowned on and persecuted by the antichristian rulers, and compelled to refrain from the expression of their evangelical faith before the world, and retire into seclusion. The true ministers and worshippers in their relations as assertors and vindicators of the gospel in opposition to antichrist, are symbolized by the witnesses clothed in sackcloth, bearing testimony to the truth, and

enduring persecution and martyrdom ; while faithful ministers and true servants of God, proclaiming great truths, assailing and defeating antichrist, and fulfilling important offices for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, are denoted by angels descending from the sky.

Similar relations of the representative agents and agencies to those that are represented, are seen in the other symbols. Stars and lamps that radiate light on the eye, are used to denote agents that communicate spiritual light to the mind, chap. i. 20, iv. 5 ; the influence of an irritating material cause on the body, to indicate the agency of harassing political causes on the mind, xvi. 2 ; the torturing influence of poisonous animals on the body, to symbolize the torturing inflictions on the church of cruel conquerors who exercise an antagonist religion, ix. 10 ; and the deadly agency of venomous animals, to represent the deadly influence of false religious teachers, ix. 19, 20. The agency of material causes destroying the life of animals, is employed to denote the violent agency of men in destroying fellowmen, xvi. 3, 4 ; the violent destructive action of powerful physical agents on the vegetable world, to symbolize the violent and resistless agency of masses of men destroying classes and multitudes in the political world, viii. 7 ; the tinging of symbols of communities with blood, to denote that those whom they represent are to become besmeared with blood by the slaughter of one another, or of foreign masses invading or repelling them, xvi. 3, 4, 5 ; and the infusion of a deadly element into the symbol of communities, to indicate the generation in them of dispositions prompting them to a destructive agency on other communities, viii. 10, 11.

This law of analogy in characteristics of nature and agency, in contradistinction from a sameness of species, thus holds throughout the Apocalypse. The only deviations in any degree are, when the agents to be represented are of a nature that cannot properly be symbolized by any thing else than themselves, such as separate spirits, saints raised from the dead, the deity, the incarnate Word in his station as King of kings and Lord of lords. There is obviously nothing in the whole circle of the social or material world, that can properly symbolize the spirits of the martyrs. There is no other order of beings that has undergone an analogous change in its mode of existence. There is no other within our knowledge capable of such a change ; and to have employed an arbitrary sign, that sustained no resemblance to them, would not only have misled or given no

information whatever, but would have thrown uncertainty over the whole system of symbolization; inasmuch as analogy or likeness would have ceased to be uniformly its characteristic. If there were an instance in which the use of the sign to denote the thing signified, was not founded on resemblance, and no reason could be discerned for the choice of such a sign in that instance, what assurance could be felt, that analogy is the principle of symbolization, and furnishes the clue to its meaning? No arbitrary sign then could have answered the end, as there would have been no key to the signification: nor could have been safe, as it would have rendered the relation of all other symbols doubtful to the things represented by them. From the necessities of the case therefore, in order to their representation to the senses of the prophet, the disembodied martyrs appear in their own persons; and to guard the student of the vision against interpreting them like other symbols, as representatives by analogy, they are expressly declared to be the spirits of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held, and exhibited as uttering sentiments, and receiving an answer, appropriate to that relation to God. A similar reason exists in all the other instances, for the introduction in person of the beings whom the visions represent: as of the Deity, the incarnate Word, the martyrs and saints raised from the dead, and Satan. There is nothing in the universe presenting any analogy to the Selfexistent, the Redeemer in his glorified human nature and exaltation to supreme dominion, the saints raised from the dead incorruptible and glorious, nor the great prince of fallen angels, or his subordinates. These deviations from the general law of symbolization therefore, occasioned as they thus are by an impossibility of following it in these instances, and being the only mode of deviation that offers it no contradiction, manifestly support, instead of weakening it, and confirm the propriety of adhering to it in the construction of all other symbols. To depart from it, is as fatal and as absurd, as it were to violate any other invariable and important law of language. It would be universally felt to be an error, were an interpreter, in endeavoring to unfold the allegories of the prophets, to overlook the fact that they are all founded on one principle, and to be construed by one rule,—that of an analogy between the objects they point to the eye and fancy, and another class which they are employed to illustrate; and to construe some, as having no representative significance, and others as truly allegorical. Yet such an interpreter were not more unskilful, nor more inconsistent with him-

self, than he who pursues a similar course in the solution of prophetic symbols, treating some of them without any reason, as mere signs of agents or events like themselves, and others as representatives of agents and events of a different and analogous nature.

This, then, is the first great law of symbolization; the most extensive in its application, and the most essential to be understood. Unhappily, however, though graven in the most conspicuous characters on every page of the Apocalypse, it has not been the guide of interpreters, nor even attracted their notice. Had it been discerned and obeyed, it would have withheld them from a large portion of the solutions, which they have deemed of the utmost significance, and relied on with the greatest confidence. It overturns innumerable shadowy fabrics, which genius and learning have erected, and endeavored to invest with the air of truth, as

The sword of Michael smites and fells
Squadrons at once.

Had it, for example, been perceived that symbols drawn from the rulers of the Roman empire, are not representatives of agents absolutely like themselves, but analogous persons in some other body of men, having a resemblance to the population of that empire, as a vast community of various characters, and sustaining a common relation to laws, teachers, and rulers, it would have withheld them from looking to the military or civil history of Rome for the verification of those symbols; it being as preposterous to turn in that direction for the agents and events denoted by them, as it were to look to a vineyard for the agents and events denoted by the allegory of Isaiah, chap. v.; or to an eagle, a cedar, and a vine, for those represented in the allegory of Ezekiel, chap. xvii. Yet, such is the error of Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, Rosenmuller, and others, in interpreting the first, third, and fourth seals of the insurrections and wars of the Jews; and of Mr. Brightman, Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Whiston, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Mr. Faber, Mr. Elliott, and many others, in referring them to other military and civil actors and events of the Roman empire.

There are several subordinate laws of great importance, to which the law of analogy gives birth.

II. When intelligent beings or creatures of life are used as symbols, they represent intelligent agents; never mere abstractions, actions, or qualities, in distinction from beings of whom

they are predicable. This is obviously required by analogy. What resemblance is there between a creator, and the work which he creates ; an agent, and the acts which he exerts ; a being of whom a faculty or virtue is predicable, and an abstract conception of that faculty or virtue. There manifestly are no things in the whole circle of existence more distantly unlike, and whose relations are more emphatically the converse of each other. It is equally requisite, also, in order to a certainty of interpretation. As several of those symbols are indisputably representatives of intelligent agents, and as no imperative reason can be conceived for a deviation from that usage, a departure in a single instance would throw a cloud of doubt over every other similar symbol.

That this is invariably the law, is indisputably clear, moreover, from the fact that in every instance where a living being is used as a symbol, actions are predicated of it, which were solecistical, were that which it denotes an action, not an agent. This is true not only of human and angelic symbols, as of the first three seals, the majestic shape ascending from the east with the seal of God, the giant form, clothed in a cloud and circled by a rainbow, descending from heaven ; of monster shapes likewise, as the locusts and horsemen of the fifth and sixth trumpets, the seven-headed dragon, the ten-horned wild beast, and the beast with two horns, but also of the spirits of the martyrs and saints in the twentieth chapter, whom many interpreters have regarded as representatives of actions and qualities, rather than agents. They are as indisputably as any other symbols in the visions, treated in their representative character as persons. They are not only exhibited as having at a former period acted in a relation to the wild beast, uttered a testimony for God, and been put to death, but as being now raised from the dead, and as reigning as kings with Christ a thousand years. To regard them as mere symbols of characteristics, such as the courage, patience, or fidelity of martyrs, is moreover to reverse the whole significance of the vision, and make it indicative of a persecution by the beast, and false prophet of the faithful, in place of their resurrection from death, exaltation to thrones, and reign with Christ on the earth. A patient endurance of evil, a dauntless courage, an inflexible adherence to the faith, amidst the greatest trials and sufferings, such as were displayed by the martyrs, can only be exhibited in conditions of reproach, persecution, and martyrdom like theirs.

III. The Son of God, when appearing as a symbol, is a representative only of his own person, never of his mere agency, the agency of the Spirit, or an act of providence. There is no anal-

ogy between his person and his actions ; there is no analogy between his person and an act of the Holy Spirit ; there is none between him, and an event of providence. To regard him as the representative of either of these, were therefore not only wholly without reason, but to contradict the principle of symbolization. It were likewise in contradiction to the reason that he appears in person in the visions, that there is nothing in the universe that can properly represent his nature and station as the King of kings ; and finally, that he represents his own person only, not any other of the Godhead, nor his own, nor any other agency, is certain from the fact, that in each vision in which he appears, he is shown to be the Word of God, both by symbols of his attributes and office, and express declarations ; and by the ascription to him of actions that are peculiar to him in his exaltation as the incarnate King of kings.

IV. In all instances where beings appearing as symbols represent their own persons, it is clearly shown by declarations and descriptions who they are.

Thus the glorious human form appearing in the first vision, expressly declares himself to be the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, who had been dead and is alive for evermore, and has the keys of death and the grave ; characters that belong only to the incarnate Word in his exaltation to the throne of the universe. The disembodied spirits appearing under the fifth seal, are said to be the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God, by the inhabitants of the earth ; those also who appear in the twentieth chapter, are represented as having lived at a former period on the earth, and many of them as having refused worship to the wild beast, and suffered martyrdom ; and the dragon of the twentieth chapter is expressly declared to be the devil, who deceives the nations. As it is a deviation from the law of analogy that these beings appear as the representatives of themselves, care is thus taken to guard the reader against the error to which that law might otherwise have led, of regarding them as representatives, like other symbols, of analogous agents.

V. When purely fictitious agents are employed as symbols, they are exhibited in vision to the prophet acting out their agency, and invested in that manner with a sensible existence. Otherwise there were a want of reality, and therefore of analogy, in the representation. It were incongruous to employ an absolute non-existence, to foreshadow a real one.

This is an invariable law accordingly of symbolization. Not only are the fictitious representatives of the Apocalypse, such as

the locusts and horsemen of the trumpets, the seven-headed dragon and ten-horned wild beast, and the beast of two horns, exhibited in vision, but so also were the wild beasts of Daniel, the image of Nebuchadnezzar, and the symbolic agents of Zechariah.

VI. When the real persons appearing in the visions are exhibited with symbolical insignia or accompaniments, the uses ascribed to those symbols are also symbolical. This is required by analogy. Thus as the sword proceeding out of the mouth of the Son of God, is a symbol of the organ of speech, so the use ascribed to it is representative of the sentence of death he is to pronounce on his enemies. And as the horse on which he is exhibited in the nineteenth chapter is a symbol, so is his descent from heaven on the horse, symbolic of a descent in an analogous manner, suited to his station as the King of kings, and the victory he is to achieve over his foes.

VII. The terms in which the symbols and their actions are described, are always literal, never metaphorical, and of propriety. To unite a symbol and a metaphor in the same expression, were as incongruous, as to attempt to metaphorize a personification.

VIII. There are no representative agents in the Apocalypse, except those that are exhibited as actors in the visions. Thus the seven churches obviously are not symbols. The letters addressed to them are not prophetic, but only declaratory of the attributes, rights, will, and purposes of the Redeemer. No agency is ascribed to them as certainly future. They are only apprized by the Saviour of his perfect knowledge of their past and present character, and of the gifts with which they were to be rewarded if faithful; and the judgments with which they were to be overwhelmed if disobedient. Neither for the same reasons, are any of the persons mentioned in the epistles to those churches symbolic; such as the Jews, Antipas, false prophets, Jezebel, the Nicolaitans, and Balaamites. To regard them as symbolic were to overlook the distinction between symbols and simple history, and run into as gross an error as it were to treat symbolic representatives, as like ordinary portraits and landscapes, denoting nothing but such objects and agents as they present to the eye.

IX. Though nothing in the Apocalypse is representative, except what is exhibited in vision, yet in other prophecies symbols are employed that were not shown in vision, but merely displayed in verbal description. They, however, are distinguished by two characteristics.

First. The symbolic agents are such as were known to the prophet and those whom he addressed, and their actions and phenomena such as are natural. Thus the chief of them are the sun, the moon, meteors, the air, the earth, the sea, rivers and fountains, a city: and the phenomena ascribed to them such as are proper to those objects respectively, such as obscuration to the sun, dimness and bloodiness to the moon, a fall to meteors, lightnings, thunders, darkness to the atmosphere, earthquakes to the land, a fall to a city;—appearances and events, which being real and common, a visionary exhibition was not requisite in order to a knowledge of their nature.

Next. They are accompanied by an express designation of the persons or communities which they are employed to represent, and always exhibit an indisputable mark that they are symbols, not metaphors, in their insusceptibility of conversion, like metaphors, into similes, or allegories, which differ from metaphors only as they exhibit the particulars of resemblance at large, and are accompanied by a notice of the persons or subjects which they are employed to illustrate. Whether a prediction, therefore, be simply metaphorical, or symbolic, in which, like the visionary emblems of the Apocalypse, the actors, actions, and effects are represented by agents and phenomena of a different species, may be determined by introducing the term of comparison. If the expression may be translated in that manner into a mere simile, without varying the sense, it is a metaphor. Thus the meaning of the metaphor, Judah is a lion's whelp, is the same as of the simile, Judah is like a lion's whelp. But the prediction of Isaiah, "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heaven shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their hosts shall fall down as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree," is as obviously symbolical, as no term of comparison can be inserted between the heavens and their hosts and the events predicted of them, and those events themselves are compared to a different class, of which a scroll, the leaves of the vine, and the fruit of the fig-tree are the subjects.

Similes and metaphors are founded on partial, not like symbols on general resemblances; and are used only for illustration, not as representatives. Types are founded on more general resemblances, and used according to the following laws:—

1. No mere fictitious agents are made representatives of real agents in typical predictions. Nothing out of the circle of realities is used as an emblem, except symbols that are exhibited in

vision, and endowed in that manner with a sensible existence. A mere non-existence cannot represent a real one.

2. No person is exhibited as a type of another, except in a relation or station which he has himself sustained. Had not David been a king, he could not have been used as a type of the Messiah as king. Had not Elijah been a prophet, he could not have been employed as a type of John the Baptist. Had not Abraham been a believer, he could not have served as a representative or exemplar of believers.

3. No action of a person except one that he has already exerted, is made a representative of an analogous act of another person or community, and for a similar reason. It were to make a nonentity the pattern or representative of a reality. A return of the Jews, for example, to their own land, cannot be made a type of any other analogous action, either of that or any other people, unless such a return from dispersion have actually taken place.

4. The Son of God in his exaltation, is never exhibited as a type or representative of any other being; nor any action of his, as a type of the action of any other being. And the reason is obvious. It were inconsistent with his deity to be made a representative of any dependent being. It were inconsistent with the peculiarity of his person, station, and agency, as the incarnate Word, to be made the representative of the Holy Spirit.

5. Were one of his acts to be made the symbol of another and different agency, to be exerted either by himself or the Spirit, still, agreeably to the third law, it could not be used as a type, until he had exerted it. Before his coming in the clouds visibly to every eye, can be a type of any other agency, he must so come in the clouds, and exert all the acts, and fulfil all the conditions predicted of that appearance.

X. All the agents and phenomena exhibited in the visions of the Apocalypse are symbolic, except the interpreting angels and those bearing the trumpets and vials, whose office is merely to assist the revelation. Thus the silence of half an hour, after the opening of the seventh seal, the angel flying through mid-heaven saying, with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth," and the voices from heaven, are doubtless as representative as any of the other agents and phenomena presented to the senses of the prophet.

XI. The symbolic agents attending the throne of the Almighty, and serving in his presence, are to be distinguished from those that appear on the earth. The former, such as the living creatures, the elders, and the angels uniting in their worship, minis-

tering at the altar, and fulfilling other offices in the divine presence, are to be regarded as representatives only of agents there, not on earth. The latter, such as the hosts of Michael and Satan warring in the atmosphere, the angels having power over the four winds, the majestic shape ascending from the east bearing the seal of God, the gigantic form robed in a cloud and crowned with iris splendors that descending set,

Upon the stormy ocean his right foot,
On the green land his left,

and others of the like nature fulfilling their offices on earth, are in like manner representatives only of agents here.

XII. In complex symbols, the representative person is to be distinguished from the symbolic accompaniments, which are merely designed to show his office, character, and relations. Thus, under the first seal, the rider of the horse is the symbolic agent, the bow but denotes his office, and his station and movement on the horse, that he is in the successful exercise of that office. In like manner in the cherubim of Ezekiel, it is doubtless the face of man that denotes the order of intelligences to which the cherub belongs, while the face of the lion, the eagle, and the ox, the wings and the innumerable eyes, are employed merely to denote the vast sublimation of their sensitive nature, expansion and refinement of faculties, and strength and perfection of character to which they are there exalted.

XIII. Symbolic agents that are representative of men, denote an order and succession of agents, acting in the same relations, and exerting a similar agency. That such is the office of the principal symbols is indisputable, as of the ten-horned wild beast, which denotes the united civil rulers of the western Roman empire after its division into ten kingdoms, through a period of many generations; of the image, which symbolizes a similar union of the numerous ecclesiastical rulers and teachers of the same empire through successive ages; the seven-headed dragon, the monster locusts and horsemen; as is manifest from the period through which their agency continues; the woman clothed with sunbeams, her son, the witnesses, the horsemen of the first four seals, the angels flying through the midst of heaven, the angel clothed in a cloud, and the angel bearing the seal of God. The offices they sustain, the agencies they exert, and such of their periods as are specified, require that construction. And thence this method of representation is requisite throughout, in order to a due proportion of the agents and their agency to each other.

As a vast body and succession of men is denoted by a wild beast, whose term of life, according to analogy, must be short ; and as the period of its agency is for that reason represented by a proportionably short duration, so in order to concinnity and likelihood, other classes and successions of men are required to be represented by single agents, and long periods of agency by periods that are short.

XIV. Accordingly the periods ascribed to those representative agents, the wild beast, the witnesses, the star-crowned woman, are denoted by terms proportionably diminished, by the substitution of days for years, and months for a number of years equal to their number of days.

XV. In interpreting symbols like those drawn from the physical world, embracing many classes of objects, they are to be contemplated as a whole, and a counterpart sought sustaining towards them an analogy as a whole ; not considered in detail, as the elements differ of which they consist, and as though each, notwithstanding its relations to the whole, retained its own peculiar meaning. Thus though mountains, trees, grass, are used in other Scriptures to metaphorsize classes of men, or men in general, it does not follow that they bear a similar signification in a symbol of which they are a part ; or that it is to their having such meanings as metaphors, that symbols in which they are united owe in any degree their significance. The assumption that they still retain their metaphorical meaning is preposterous, and has been a fruitful source of error in the exposition of the Apocalypse. As there is no counterpart to the physical, except the social world, symbols drawn from the one, embracing a variety of objects, like a landscape, a country, the earth, of course denote an analogous union of agents in the social world, either religious, or civil, or military. When the whole, therefore, thus of necessity denotes men, it is preposterous to regard that representation as the office of only a part ; or the signification of the whole as the consequence of the unsymbolic meaning of subordinate portions. It is the union of the whole in the symbol and thing symbolized, that constitutes the analogy ; not any separate adaptation of the particulars of the one, aside from that union, to represent the particulars of the other. More, perhaps, of the errors of expositors are traceable to the neglect of this obvious law than any other. The question is perpetually raised by them, What do mountains, trees, seas, hills, rivers, denote in other Scriptures, and on the assumption that their import when united

in a symbol, is to be determined by their meaning when used separately as metaphors or similes.

XVI. The import ascribed to a symbol is to be limited to that which it naturally involves, irrespective of any peculiar or metaphorical use of its agents, actions, or terms, which other passages may present. Thus to harvest the grain crops of a season, is to cut them from the stalk, bind them in sheaves, and gather them together, in order to preservation and appropriation to use. It denotes nothing more. When used, therefore, to symbolize an agency on men, it is to be interpreted as simply representing them as gathered together from their scene of life, in order to some subsequent destiny. But whether good or evil, if determined, is to be determined from something else than the mere symbol. To infuse into it a higher meaning, because a harvest is thought to denote in other passages the gathering of men for destruction, is to create a sense for the symbol, not to interpret it; to superinduce a foreign meaning, not to unfold that with which it is itself fraught.

XVII. The station of the heavenly sanctuary is to be conceived as over Patmos, at a great elevation, whence the apocalyptic earth, from the Euphrates to the west and north of Europe, was visible; the throne as in the holy of holies, and the apostle as at first in the sanctuary whence the holy of holies, the inner sanctuary, the veil being withdrawn, might be seen; afterwards at the vestibule or court, from which the earth with all its great objects, seas, rivers, mountains, forests, and cities might be beheld, and often on the earth itself.

THE APOCALYPSE.

SECTION I.

CHAPTER I. 1-3.

THE TITLE.

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him to show to his servants what must shortly come to pass, and sending he signified by his angel to his servant John, who attested the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, whatever he saw.

Blessed is he who reads and they who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things written in it, for the time is near.

The title of the prophecy was obviously prefixed after the visions were written, as it was after the symbols had been shown and interpreted by the angel ; while the visions themselves, manifestly from chapter x. 4, were written successively as they were beheld. The delivery of the Apocalypse to Christ, was doubtless the delivery of the sealed book its symbol, of which there is a representation in the fifth chapter. The apostle's attesting the word of God, is his record as a prophet of the revelation as it was made to him in the visions, and interpreted by the angel. That to which he gave his testimony, he says both here and in the last chapter, was that which he saw. It is apparent also from his benediction of those who read and hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it. To regard, with Dr. Hammond and Vitringa, not the revelation, but the gospel which he had preached and written, as the subject of his testimony, is to refer the benediction likewise to the readers of his gospel instead of the Apocalypse, which is in contradiction to his language, and misrepresents his gospel as a prophecy, instead of a history. That blessing implies that the prophecy is easily intelligible to the attentive reader and hearer, and that they who understand and treasure up the great things which it teaches, will find them sources of enjoyment here, and everlasting happiness hereafter.

The office of the angel was simply to guide and interpret, not

as some seem to imagine, to display the visionary spectacle to the apostle. That is to exalt him to the station of the incarnate Word, whose prerogative alone it is to reveal to creatures the purposes of God. The testimony of Christ which the apostle witnessed, is his annunciation of himself in the first vision and messages to the churches of Asia ; the word of God, his purpose as made known by the symbols, the voices from heaven, and the interpreting angel.

As the revelation embraces a vast succession of events extending through many ages, that they were soon to come to pass, implies, not that they were soon to reach their completion, but only that the series was speedily to commence. That representation is agreeable to usage. It is customary to speak of successions of events and periods of time as nigh, how vast soever or interminable even they may be, when the commencement is at hand ; as of a war, an age, a century, the millennium, eternity, though the term covers every other part as absolutely as the first of the period or series.

SECTION II.

CHAPTER I. 4-8.

THE APOSTLE'S SALUTATION OF THE CHURCHES.

JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia ; grace to you and peace from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has washed us from our sins in his blood, and made us kings and priests unto God even his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he comes with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they who pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him. Yea, amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

The seven spirits are the Holy Spirit, denominated seven because symbolized by seven lamps. Paul's salutations of the churches are eminently beautiful, and rise in some instances to grandeur. But this transcends them in vastness and majesty of

thought, presenting in a few words the loftiest conceptions of which we are capable of the Deity ; and the most impressive of the office and work of the Redeemer. His coming with the clouds, is that doubtless which is symbolized by his descent on the white horse, in the nineteenth chapter ; and they who pierce him are they who, like the Jews, are to reject him as Messiah, choose some other method than his of salvation, and endeavor to debar him from his throne. That all the tribes of the earth are to wait because of him, implies that they are to survive his advent, and expect from him an avenging judgment. The asseveration, Yea, amen, and proclamation of his attributes, denotes the certainty of his coming, and that it is to carry to all his creatures a resistless demonstration that he is the Self-existent, the Eternal, and Almighty.

SECTION III.

CHAPTER I. 9-20.

THE FIRST VISION.—CHRIST'S ANNUNCIATION.

I JOHN your brother and fellow-partaker in the affliction, and kingdom, and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle called Patmo, on account of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet, saying, What thou seest write in a book, and send to the seven churches in Ephesus, and in Smyrna, and in Pergamos, and in Thyatira, and in Sardis, and in Philadelphia, and in Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice which spake with me, and having turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like a son of man, clothed with a robe to the feet, and girded at the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and hairs were white as white wool, as snow ; and his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet like glowing brass, as purified in a furnace, and his voice as a voice of many waters ; and holding in his right hand seven stars ; and from his mouth a sharp two-edged sword proceeded, and his countenance [was] as the sun shining in its strength.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he put his right hand on me, saying, Fear not : I am the First and the Last and the Living. I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever, and have the keys of death and of the grave. Write therefore what thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which are

to be after these ; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are messengers of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches.

Being in the Spirit was being in the prophetic ecstasy in which visions were beheld and revelations received : being like a son of man, was being of a human form simply. That he was the incarnate Word whom the apostle beheld, was shown not by that form, but by his annunciation of himself, and the symbols which he bore.

The design of this vision was to apprise the prophet, from whom the commands and messages about to be uttered proceeded, and raise him to becoming thoughts of him, and the grounds on which he founds his government. And the means chosen for the purpose, the personal appearance and address of Christ, are marked by the highest adaptation. Our sensitive and rational nature is such, that the presence of such a majestic being dazzling us with the effulgence of his countenance, accompanied by insignia of dominion, and addressing us with authority, would instantly raise in us an irresistible conviction of his deity, and our responsibility to him. Equally suited to that end are the thoughts which the Redeemer addressed to the apostle, who had fallen as dead at the spectacle. Of all the conceptions of which we are capable, they take a more powerful hold than any others of our moral nature, filling the intellect with his greatness, independence, and dominion, and the heart with a sense of his rights.

In this use of means more adapted than any others to impress the apostle with his divinity and office as Redeemer, he displayed a knowledge of our nature and a beauty of wisdom and condescension, that are seen only in God. That a foundation exists in us for a recognition of the Deity, and an all-powerful sense of his rights over us, is indisputable. If we endeavor to conceive the impressions which would be made on us by such a vision, the more adequate our apprehensions become of the convictions and emotions to which it would give birth, the clearer will be our sight, and the profounder our feeling, that it would bear us irresistibly to the conclusion that we were in the presence of our Maker. It is a law of our nature which no logic can set aside, and to which no unbelief, ignorance, or stupidity can offer an obstruction. Not only the apostle in this instance, and at the transfiguration with Peter and James, but Paul, Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Moses, Job, sunk overwhelmed at the presence of the Almighty.

And such a sensibility to the proofs of his presence and rights, is obviously necessary to fit us to be subjects of his moral government. Were there not a foundation within us for such an instinctive and all-powerful feeling of his title to our homage, because of his nature, and relations as our Maker, his claims could lay no hold of our consciences. We should be incapable indeed of a sense of responsibility to him. Were not that feeling independent of our reasonings, spontaneous, and absolutely irrepressible, however much we might strive to stifle or escape it, it would at the best be but feeble and inefficient even in those who sought to cherish it, and would fade into extinction in those who endeavored to counteract or mislead it by false reasonings. But God has not built his government on so precarious a foundation as our wishes or opinions. He has so formed us, that he has a grasp on our moral nature which no struggles of ours can ever escape, no aversion diminish, nor sophistry relax. He has but to reveal himself to us and proclaim his deity, and blindness, unbelief, and insensibility vanish, and our whole nature responds to the rightfulness of his claims to our awe and love. The grounds of his government are thus laid in our constitution beyond the possibility of eradication by us, and are to endure throughout our immortal existence.

The truth thus taught in the first vision, presents a sublime exemplification of the blessings, which the things written in the book are suited to yield to those who understand and observe them. Had it been studied attentively, apprehended and obeyed, it would have prevented the vast cloud of false and pernicious speculations with which philosophers and theologians have filled the world, respecting the foundation of morals. In what a resistless light it exhibits the folly and impiety with which most of them are marked ;—the doctrine of expedience, of the greatest good, of human authority, of custom, and, which transcends all others in the audacity with which it sets aside the claims of the Almighty, the doctrine that he has no right as God and creator, but only as benefactor ; and that that right sinks as his bounties diminish, and expires when he punishes. A just understanding of the grounds on which he builds his government, would have withheld them too, from many of the erroneous constructions which they have put on the visions. It is from his prerogatives as the Self-existent and the creator, that the falsehood and impiety of the claims of the wild beast and false prophet to a supreme homage are seen.

While the Redeemer's person and annunciation of himself re-

vealed his deity, the accompanying symbols denoted the agency he was to exert ; his relation to the stars and candlesticks, his rule over the church ; the sword proceeding from his mouth, the avenging sentence he was to pronounce on his enemies.

In denominating the seven stars and seven candlesticks a mystery, and explaining their meaning, it is shown that the objects presented in the visions are representative, and that the principle of representation is analogy. A star is a teacher who spreads the light of God's word through the circle around him ; a candlestick a church supporting such a teacher in the station in which he fulfils that office.

The seven churches are treated by Vitringa and many others as symbolic, but in violation of analogy, as it implies both that the representative agents are of the same species as the beings whom they represent, and their actions the same as those which they foreshadow. The admission of such a principle of representation, were to involve the whole Apocalypse in uncertainty. If each of the seven churches indicate a similarity of doctrine and character in the church at large at a later period, then must the wild beast with seven heads and ten horns be held as symbolizing a vast body of similar wild beasts ; which as it would imply the creation of a new species, and therefore a total departure from the laws of providence, and is unworthy to be made the subject of prophecy, is wholly incredible.

It is equally at variance with the law, that no act of a symbol can represent an act of the agent symbolized, unless it be either really exerted by the representative, or exhibited to the prophet in vision. But of the things predicated of those churches, a portion were future. Some of their members were to be cast into prison, and to suffer persecution ten days ; some were to be kept from the hour of temptation which was to come on the whole world ; and others were to be rebuked in love and chastened. In order, therefore, that their future existence and agency in those conditions, might be made a symbol of the existence and like agency of the church in similar conditions at future periods, the agents, scenery, and actions should have been exhibited to the apostle in vision. Such is invariably the law of symbolization, and obviously for the most imperative reasons. To make a mere fictitious act, which has not been invested with even a visionary existence, a representative, were to make a nonentity a sign ; and thence, if the assumption on which the construction in question proceeds were legitimate, that the symbol and thing symbolized are of the same species, were to make the action foreshown

also a nonentity ; which were not only to degrade the whole to utter unintelligibleness, but to make the pretence that it is a representation of the future, a mockery.

These views are confirmed by their want of success, who have endeavored to show a correspondence between the characteristics of the first six of the churches, and the church at large at six successive periods. The applications of Mr. Brightman, Dr. More, Vitranga, and others, are wholly arbitrary, exhibit no better resemblances than might be found at many other periods, and are embarrassed at every step by flagrant contradiction, or a total want of likeness.

Equally erroneous is the assumption which others have advanced, that those churches were symbols of the church at large of that period. That is likewise against analogy, which forbids the use of a symbol of the same species, as the thing symbolized, except when no other adequate representative can be found. But that reason does not exist for making the church a symbol of itself, as it is actually represented in the Apocalypse by a candlestick.

Those churches then are not symbolic. Neither are the messages addressed to them wholly prophetic, though they foreshow trials and persecutions on the one hand, and supports and rewards on the other. They are however not the less important, as they make known the great principles on which the Redeemer was to conduct his administration through a long succession of ages, and form thence a most instructive introduction to the visions, in which the conduct of men under that administration is foreshown. Thus he not only proclaims to them his deity, his prerogatives as the Ruler of the universe, his claims to their homage, and his perfect knowledge of their character and condition, but apprizes them that he is to subject them to trial, and allow some to be persecuted and put to death ; that he shall desert and disown the lukewarm, and overwhelm with terrible judgments the apostate, but support the faithful with his presence, and finally crown them with eternal rewards ;—promises and threatenings that have been conspicuously verified in his providence toward both churches and individuals, through the long series of ages that has followed.

SECTION IV.

CHAPTER II. 1-28.

EPISTLES TO EPHEBUS, SMYRNA, PERGAMOS, AND THYATIRA.

To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write ; These saith he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks : I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and that thou canst not bear the wicked, and thou hast tried them who call themselves apostles, and are not, and hast found them false ; and thou hast patience, and hast borne for my name, and hast not fainted. But I have [it] against thee that thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou hast fallen, and reform and do thy first works. But if not, I come to thee quickly ; and I will remove thy candlestick from its place, unless thou reform. But thou hast this, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God.

And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write : These saith the First and the Last, who was dead and has revived, I know thy works, and affliction, and poverty, (but thou art rich,) and false accusation by those who say they are Jews, and are not, but a synagogue of Satan. Fear not what thou art about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have affliction ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be injured by the second death.

And to the messenger of the church in Pergamos write : These saith he who has the two-edged sharp sword, I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, where the throne of Satan [is.] And thou holdest my name, and wouldst not deny my faith even in the days in which Antipas [was] my faithful witness, who was put to death among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against thee ; that thou hast there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat offerings to idols, and commit fornication. So also thou hast those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans in like manner. Reform therefore. But if not, I come to thee quickly, and I will fight with them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give of the manna which is hidden. And I will give

him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he who receives it.

And to the messenger of the church in Thyatira write: These saith the Son of God, who has his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet like glowing brass; I know thy works, and love, and faith, and ministry, and thy patience, and thy last works to be more than the first. But I have [it] against thee that thou sufferest thy wife Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and teaches and seduces my servants to commit fornication, and eat offerings to idols. And I gave her time that she might reform, and she chooses not to reform from her fornication. Behold, I cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great affliction, unless they shall reform from her works. And I will slay her children with death. And all the churches shall know that I am he who searches the reins and hearts, and I will give to each one of you according to your works. But to you the rest who are in Thyatira I say, as many as do not hold that doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I lay on you no other burden; but what ye have, hold until I come. And he who overcomes, and who keeps my works to the end, I will give him power over the nations, and he shall rule them with an iron sceptre, as vessels of clay are broken, as I have received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The doctrine of Balaam was the doctrine that the ministers of God might, for gain, counsel and promote the seduction of his people to mingle in the feasts and impurities of idolaters: the doctrine of the Nicolaitans probably, that the people of God might lawfully partake of their offerings to idols, and indulge in their excesses.

To slay with death, is to destroy by a natural disease, in contradistinction from an extraordinary and violent instrument, as by the pestilence instead of the sword.

As all the gifts promised to the victorious are gifts after their victory, the hidden manna denotes the sustenance in the life of the future world, and subsequently to their resurrection doubtless, like the other rewards, all of which are of that period. Thus the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God, is the tree of life in the new Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from God at the establishment of Christ's kingdom on the earth, after the first resurrection. To be freed from the power of the second death, is to have part in the first resurrection. To receive a white stone, on which a new name is written, is to receive a badge of the new and peculiar relation to Christ, to which the redeemed

are to be exalted at their resurrection and acceptance. To have power over the nations, and rule them with an iron sceptre, is to be made a king over them, and to reign with Christ, which is not to be granted till the commencement of his visible reign on earth, after the first resurrection. As Christ is the bright and morning star which is then to rise on the new Jerusalem, and supersede the need in it of sun or moon; to have that star is to belong to the new Jerusalem at its descent from heaven. To be clothed in a white robe, is to be clothed as the bride is adorned, when prepared by a resurrection and acceptance for a descent as the new Jerusalem. To have the name of God written on the forehead, and the name of the city of God the new Jerusalem, is to be one of the raised and glorified saints. And to sit with Christ on his throne, is to reign with him in his kingdom, during the period denoted by the thousand years, after the first resurrection. The reason that the blessings thus promised to the faithful are all blessings of the life that is to follow the resurrection, is, doubtless, that otherwise they were not blessings of a full redemption from the curse of sin, and an elevation to the stations and honors which Christ is to confer on his people, on their public adoption as joint heirs with him and sons of God. Their full release from the penalty of sin is not to be accomplished till they are restored from the dominion of death, its great public penalty, and raised to an immortal and glorious life. To have promised any thing less than these gifts, had been only to promise something intermediate between the blessings of this life and a full salvation.

SECTION V.

CHAPTER III. 1-22.

EPISTLES TO SARDIS, PHILADELPHIA, AND LAODICEA.

AND to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These saith he who has the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars, I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things remaining that are about to die; for I have not found thy works perfectly performed before my God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received, and heard, and hold, and reform. If therefore thou shouldst not watch, I will come to thee as a thief, and thou canst not know in what hour I will come

to thee. But thou hast a few names in Sardis which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot his name from the book of life ; and I will acknowledge his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

And to the messenger of the church in Philadelphia write : These saith he who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens ; I know thy works. Behold, I have given before thee a door opened, which no one can shut ; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but lie ; behold, I will constrain them that they shall come, and shall fall before thy feet, and know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, which is about to come on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. I come quickly. Hold what thou hast, that no one may take thy crown. Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he can never more go out. And I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from my God, and my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

And to the messenger of the church in Laodicea write : These saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Head of the creation of God ; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to cast thee from my mouth. Because thou sayest, I abound, and am enriched, and have want of nothing ; and thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and pitiable, and poor, and blind, and naked ; I counsel thee to buy of me gold, purified by fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white garments that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear, and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes that thou mayest see. As many as I love I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and reform. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any one hear my voice and open the door, I will enter to him and sup with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes I will give to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and sat with my Father on his throne. He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The epistles, though resembling each other in many respects, differ in the attributes and prerogatives which the Redeemer presents as the ground of his title to the homage of the church. It

is he who holds the seven stars in his right hand, and walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, who addresses the church at Ephesus; the First and the Last, who was dead and nas revived, who speaks to the messenger of Smyrna; and the Son of God, who has his eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet like glowing brass, who utters the terrible denunciations to the apostates, and the sublime promises to the faithful of Thyatira. It is he, who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars, that exhorts the church at Sardis to reformation, vigilance, and steadfastness; he who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens, who promises deliverance and a victory to the saints of Philadelphia; and the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Head of the creation of God, who forewarns the lukewarm of Laodicea of their rejection. These annunciations of himself are inimitably grand, and suited, immeasurably above any others that can be conceived, to impress those to whom they were addressed, with a sense of his infinite knowledge and power, his universal dominion, the awfulness of his justice, and the riches of his grace; and they close with an expression of condescension and love which is scarcely equalled in any other part of the Scriptures. He exhibits himself as standing at the door, and soliciting admission to the presence of his people, and promises to those who allow him to enjoy their society here, a participation in the regal honors to which he is exalted in heaven. What a beauty of condescension! What a grandeur of benignity!

The term ἄγγελος, translated in the common version angel, literally denotes a messenger, and is undoubtedly employed in that sense. It is certain that it is used literally, inasmuch as it is used, chap. i. 20, in the explanation of the symbolic stars; which are employed to represent the angels of the churches. To use a metaphor to explain a symbol were incongruous. ἄγγελος, messenger, is undoubtedly therefore used as literally in that interpretation, as is ἐκκλησία, church. But it has no literal meaning as a title of men, except that of messenger; and its secondary use as the name of an order of spiritual agents, is founded on their employment as messengers; it being applied to the whole order, because those of them who have visited our world, have come as the ministers of God. There is no conceivable ground for the use of the term in these instances as a metaphor. Whatever theory is entertained of the ministers of the seven churches, there is no relation in which an angelic being can be imagined with any propriety to be used to metaphorize them. An angel

most certainly is not an appropriate representative of authority. Angels are ministers in their relations to men, as well as to God, not rulers; and their office as ministers who bear messages, is that which the name literally denotes.

That it is used in its original sense of messenger, is seen finally from the fact, that the letters were to be sent by the apostle to the churches, and sent therefore by messengers, and messengers doubtless commissioned by the churches themselves, as it is not probable that appropriate persons could have been found by the apostle in the desert isle of Patmos. This supposition moreover is in accordance with the customs of the primitive church. Paul speaks of it with surprise and disapprobation, that on his first arraignment at Rome, all his friends forsook him, 2 Tim. iv. 16; which indicates that it was deemed becoming, and was customary, that the associates of those who were suffering persecution, should attend and sustain them in their trials. He commended Onesiphorus, that he sought him out on his visit at that city, refreshed him often, and was not ashamed of his chain, 2 Tim. i. 16, 17. He was allowed during his long residence there as a prisoner, to live in his own hired house, and all who chose were permitted to visit him.

The representation in the letter to the Romans, ascribed to Ignatius, and in the story of his martyrdom, that some of the church of Antioch accompanied him in his journey to Rome, and that in his progress through Asia Minor, pastors and members of the churches visited him, administered to his wants, and testified their interest in his approaching martyrdom, though those writings are undoubtedly supposititious, may justly be regarded as founded on the custom of the churches to delegate some of their number to attend the martyrs on their removal to distant places, and at their death.¹

It was indisputably customary during the later pagan persecutions, for the members of the church to visit the confessors in prison, supply their wants, and comfort and encourage them. Dionysius of Corinth, in a letter to the church at Rome, written between the years 168 and 176, when Soter was its bishop, represents it as having been the custom of the Christians of that city from the first, to assist their fellow-believers who were in want or suffering persecution; sending to the numerous churches in other cities, such things as were needful both for the supply of the poor, and the relief of those of the brethren who were sen-

¹ Ignatii Epist. ad Rom. c. 9, 10. Martyrii c. 3. Eusebii Eccl. H. lib. iii. c. 36.

tenced to the mines.¹ Tertullian in like manner relates that the Christians of Africa, were accustomed to appropriate a portion of their earnings to the relief, not only of orphans, the aged, and the unfortunate among them, but of those who were imprisoned or condemned to the mines for their confession of the faith.² Cyprian in his first letter written to the presbyters and deacons of Carthage during his concealment, while exhorting them to take all needful care to supply the indigent, and relieve those who were imprisoned for their confession of Christ, desired them also to caution the people against unnecessarily exciting the displeasure of their enemies, by assembling in crowds at the prison, in order to administer to the necessities of the brethren who were held in confinement.³ It is represented by Eusebius as an unusual cruelty in Licinius, that he prohibited the Christians from visiting their associates whom he had imprisoned, and supplying them with food, though no adequate provision was made for their sustenance by the magistrates.⁴

The ministers of the churches also in their imprisonment, exile, or voluntary retreat into seclusion, to avoid the persecuting magistrates, were accustomed to communicate with their people by messengers and letters. Cyprian appointed certain ministers of the church of Carthage, to convey his letters to his people and return their replies, and maintained a continual correspondence with them during the two years of his concealment.⁵

It was customary likewise to employ ministers of the church as messengers to convey letters to distant churches and individuals, and give and receive advice. Thus Clemens sent the letter of the church of Rome to the Corinthians by messengers, and intimates the expectation that the Corinthians would respond by a written or verbal message on their return.⁶ The letter of Ignatius to the Philadelphians, exhibits it as becoming them to ordain a deacon to go on an embassy to the church of Antioch, to congratulate it on its release from persecution, and represents that some of the neighboring churches had already sent bishops, presbyters, or deacons;⁷ and that that letter was to be sent to Philadelphia from Troy, by one who had been commissioned by the churches of Ephesus and Smyrna, to attend him to that place, on his way to Rome.⁸ There is a similar request in his letter to the Smyrnians,⁹ and to Polycarp.¹⁰ This custom of the church is accordingly represented by the author of the supposititious constitu-

¹ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. 23.

² Apologetici. c. 39.

³ Epist. v. Edit. Lips. 1838.

⁴ Eccl. Hist. lib. x. c. 8.

⁵ Epist. xxix.

⁶ c. 59.

⁷ c. 10.

⁸ c. 11.

⁹ c. 11.

¹⁰ c. 7.

tions ascribed to the apostles, as expressly enjoined by them. "If any Christian be condemned by the idolaters to the spectacles, the beasts, or the mines, for the name of Christ, do not neglect him, but send of your earnings for his sustenance, and a gift to the soldiers, that he may be better treated."¹

It is apparent thus from the New Testament, and the histories of the ages that immediately followed the period of the revelation, that messengers were customarily sent by the churches to those who were imprisoned or banished, to administer to their wants and ask instruction, who carried back their letters and verbal counsels. There is no reason to doubt therefore that the individuals denominated angels, were messengers sent by the churches to which the letters are addressed, to visit the apostle in his exile, express to him their affection, and receive from him encouragement and instruction in their difficulties. They were ministers of the word, manifestly from the duties enjoined on them, and were delegates doubtless of the teachers of the several churches, and were on that account addressed as their representatives. The reason accordingly that the epistles were addressed to those churches and not to others, probably was, that messengers were sent by them to the apostle; while the reason that they sent those messengers probably was, that they were the great and conspicuous churches of that part of Asia, that they sustained peculiar relations to him, and that they eminently needed instruction and encouragement in their trials. He represents himself as their companion in the affliction and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. He is said by the early writers to have resided at Ephesus toward the close of life, and to have died there.² He not improbably therefore had visited all those churches which were in the circuit round Ephesus, and become familiar with their ministers and members.

SECTION VI.

CHAPTER IV. 1-11.

THE VISION OF THE DEITY.

AFTER these, I looked, and behold a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard as of a trumpet speaking to me

¹ Apostol. Const. lib. v. c. 1.

² Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 20, lib. v. c. 24.

saying ; Ascend here, and I will show thee what must be after these. And immediately I was in the Spirit. And behold a throne set in heaven, and one sitting on the throne. And he who sat was in appearance like a jasper stone and sardius. And an iris arched over the throne in appearance like an emerald. And circling round the throne [were] four and twenty thrones, and on the thrones four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and on their heads golden crowns. And from the throne proceeded lightnings and voices and thunders. And seven lamps of fire [were] burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. And in front of the throne [was] as it were, a glassy sea, like crystal. And before the throne and in the circuit of the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first living creature [was] like a lion, and the second living creature like an ox, and the third living creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth living creature [was] like an eagle flying. And the four living creatures had each six wings, around and within full of eyes. And they have no pause day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord the God Almighty who was and who is and who is to come. And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne who lives forever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou the Lord our God art worthy to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things ; and for thy will they were, and were created.

The spectacle presented in this vision, was designed to show that it was from the Deity that the revelation about to be made proceeded, and to raise the prophet to a becoming sense of his infinite greatness, independence, relations and rights as creator, and the grounds on which he builds his government : and with what a beauty of wisdom were the means suited to the end ;— the disclosure to him through the parted heavens of a form of dazzling majesty, accompanied by the insignia of deity, lightnings perpetually effulging from his presence, resounding thunders, and the loftiest forms of created intelligences and regal shapes of the redeemed bending at his feet, chanting him the Self-existent, the Eternal, the Omnipotent, the Holy, the Creator of all, and acknowledging his right because of those attributes and relations to dominion over his works. Our nature is so formed, as to be irresistibly borne by such a sight to the conviction that it is the Deity who reveals himself to us, and filled with an irrepressible sense of his right to our homage. It is this that distinguishes us from irrational beings, and fits us to be subjects

of law; on this that God founds his government, and will maintain it throughout our existence; through this that each spirit as it passes into the invisible world and is raised to a clear perception of his being, presence, and relations, becomes instantly aware of its responsibility to him, and the justice or grace of his dealings with it; and through this that when the Redeemer shall come in the clouds with power and great glory, all the tribes of the earth will immediately recognise him, and sink overwhelmed with a consciousness of guilt and inability to escape his wrath.

As lamps can be the Spirit of God only as representatives, the statement that the seven lamps burning before the throne are the seven spirits of God, is an express explanation of them as symbols, and indicates accordingly that that is the office also of the other agents and objects in the visions.

The living creatures stationed near the throne are intelligences. They stand perpetually in the presence of God. They celebrate his deity, his moral perfections, and his work and right as creator. They sustain relations of superiority to the elders, as it is in concurrence with them that the latter fall down and worship. They performed offices in the conduct of the revelation also, summoning the symbolic agents as the seals were opened, and delivering to the angels the vials of wrath. They are intelligences of our race also, as is seen from their uniting in the acknowledgment of Christ's worthiness to receive the book and open its seals, because of his having redeemed them by his blood, made them kings and priests unto God, and appointed them to reign on the earth: chap. v. 9, 10. This is indicated also by the human face of those seen by Ezekiel, by which these are to be interpreted. That face undoubtedly denotes the order of intelligences to which they belong, while the office of the other faces and the numerous eyes is, to indicate the far superior senses and vaster grasp of thought to which they are there exalted.

The elders are also of our race, as is seen from their form, and their acknowledgment of Christ as their Redeemer: chap. v. They fulfilled offices likewise in conducting the revelation, in hymning the right of God to reign over his creatures, and the worthiness of Christ to be exalted to the throne, and conduct the administration of the world during the work of redemption. One of them also addressed the prophet, and apprized him that though no creature was adequate to unveil the divine purposes respecting the work of salvation, yet the God-man, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, had acquired that right by his mediation, and

would receive and open the book. They appear in their own persons, from the want of analogous agents to represent them. No other order of beings has undergone such a change in their mode of existence as disembodied spirits ; no other sustains such relations to God as they who are redeemed.

The living creatures and elders are representatives of the multitude of the redeemed in heaven, it would seem from their acknowledgment of Christ's having redeemed them by his blood unto God out of every tribe and language and people and nation, chap. v. ; a reason for his exaltation to the administration of the universe common to all the redeemed ; and as the tribes and languages and peoples and nations are very numerous, implying also a far greater number than the living creatures and elders united. Besides that relation as symbols of the redeemed in heaven, they also manifestly, from the vials of odors which they hold symbolic of the homage of the saints, sustain a representative office towards other holy beings ; as the office of priest to which the offering of incense belongs, is universally representative. They sustain undoubtedly therefore that official relation to another order of beings. Whether it be to the redeemed on earth alone, or to other holy beings also, which is not improbable, the language does not determine.

While these two classes are thus representatives of the whole body of the redeemed in heaven, they yet differ greatly from each other ; the living creatures being stationed nearest the throne, superior in rank to the elders, and preceding them in acts of worship. Whether the difference be merely in station and office, or in nature also, is left in uncertainty. The living creatures may be glorified saints who have been translated like Enoch and Elijah, and raised from the dead like the many who were raised after Christ's resurrection ; or they may be disembodied spirits differing from the elders in wisdom and dignity, as star differs from star in glory.

This view of the station and relations of the living creatures to the multitude of worshippers, is corroborated by the cherubic symbols in the tabernacle and temple, which were made after the pattern of heavenly things. In the holy of holies, which denoted the heavenly temple, were stationed two cherubs on either side the throne or mercy-seat, and numerous figures of them were wrought on the curtains of the tabernacle, and graven on the doors and walls of the temple ;—those in the inner sanctuary denoting that some of their order are perpetual attendants of God ; those in the outer, that others fulfil offices to the worshippers on

earth and perhaps in other worlds, and bear back to God notices of their homage and love.

This is in accordance with the great purpose of the Redeemer to raise those whom he saves, to a grandeur of nature like his own glorified humanity, and a dignity of station in his kingdom suited to their intimate relations to him. They are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, and kings and priests unto him, and are to reign on the earth, not doubtless in respect to one another, but to others, and not in respect to the unglorified church on earth alone perhaps, but to other orders also of holy beings, and thus be the ministers in gathering together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.

How august the view the vision thus presents of the government of God! How gracious, how wise, how beautiful that the majestic beings who serve in his immediate presence, are appointed to offices of rule and love to the holy dwelling in distant realms of his empire, and returning serve as representatives of those orders, and present to him symbols of their homage! In what grandeur it exhibits the work of redemption, through which men are exalted to that station, made the agents of displaying its greatness and beauty to all orders of intelligences, and thence of advancing them to a loftier understanding, a more fervent love, and a higher enjoyment of God!

It is no obstacle to this construction, that there were cherubim anterior to the redemption of any of our race. Their name is a name of office, not of nature, as is apparent from the fact, that the elders are not cherubim, though they as well as the living creatures are of our race. That that office was sustained by another order of beings in earlier periods of the universe, is no demonstration that the redeemed are not exalted to it under the reign of Christ.

The worship of the living creatures and elders bespeaks a lofty perfection of knowledge and beauty of rectitude. They are aware of the attributes that distinguish God from creatures:—self-existence, eternity, independence, omniscience, omnipotence; and they adore him for that which he is. They see and realize his title as creator to dominion over his works, and make that a ground of their acknowledgment and celebration of his right to reign. Their sensibility to the glory of his moral perfections is raised to a refinement and strength, equal to the perfection of their intelligence. They see an infinite beauty in his spotless righteousness, his unchangeable truth, his boundless benignity, his majestic condescension, and the vast, the all-perfect, and innu-

merable forms in which they are displayed toward his creatures, and are borne by an irresistible impulse of delight to their perpetual celebration. How beautiful in beings raised from the distance, the blindness, the alienation of revolt! How becoming those who serve in the immediate presence of the Almighty, and fulfil the offices of kings and priests towards distant obedient hosts, unfolding to them his rights, interpreting the measures of his administration, conveying to them his will, and representing them in his presence by presenting symbols of their homage! What a contrast their conceptions of him and the grounds of duty to him form to the speculations of men, who in their definitions of virtue almost universally exclude all peculiar relations to the Deity, and resolve it into policy, self-love, benevolence, opinion, or some other quality which implies that the reason that God is to be adored and obeyed, and man to be loved, is precisely the same, and wholly overlooks therefore his peculiar rights because of his nature and agency! The doctrine, indeed, that self-love is the only motive to virtue, dethrones the Deity, and exalts the individual creature in his place. The theory that opinion is the ground and rule of right, deifies in like manner the community which furnishes that opinion; and the dogma that benevolence is the distinguishing ground and characteristic of virtuous acts, deifies the sensitive and intelligent universe, in the proportion which their limited capacity of happiness bears to the infinitude of his. With what horror would the authors of those systems have turned from them, had they studied aright the views and sentiments of these worshippers in the heavenly temple. Blessed is he who reads and they who hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written in it.

Mr. Stuart exhibits the seven lamps burning before the throne, as denoting seven presence angels; but it is inconsistent with the symbolizations of this and the following vision, and with the wish of grace in chapter i. 5, from the seven spirits which they denote. That those spirits are not created intelligences, is apparent from the use of lamps as their symbols, and from the agency they are employed to represent. Had the design been to symbolize created intelligences of an angelic order, they would doubtless have been exhibited in their own persons, as the angels, living creatures, and the elders are in this and the following vision. Beside, if the seven lamps are regarded as symbols of created intelligences, according to the use of other symbols of creatures in this and the other visions, they should be interpreted as representing an order and a vast multitude, not themselves

only. The agency moreover which the action of the lamps represents, is not appropriate to created intelligences stationed in the presence of God. The office of a lamp is to give light to intelligent creatures, in order to the employments to which they are called ; and as the body is the counterpart of the mind, and the corporeal eye of the spiritual, the light which is designed for the former must, according to analogy, be the symbol of knowledge imparted to the latter. The agent, therefore, symbolized by the lamps, is an agent that enlightens intelligent creatures in the knowledge of God, and especially men, towards whom peculiarly it is that the offices are sustained, and the agencies exerted that are represented by the lamps, manifestly from the wish of grace and peace to the seven churches from the spirits which they denote. But angels are not assigned to that office ; it is the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit. It is He therefore undoubtedly from that consideration that is denoted by the lamps ; and that is certain from the invocation of grace and peace from the seven spirits before the throne, as well as from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. That invocation is an act of the highest religious homage. It involves an ascription to that which the seven lamps denote, of the attributes and prerogatives of the Deity ; and the union in the invocation of that which they denote with the Self-existent, and the incarnate Word, implies that it is equal in nature, rights and relations toward us with the Father and the Son. But it is impossible that God can have sanctioned the ascription to creatures, of the attributes, rights, and relations that are peculiar to himself ; and it is in contradiction also to the obvious aim and most conspicuous symbolizations of the book ; the object of which is to show on the one hand that the self-existent, eternal, and almighty creator is alone entitled to worship, and that the true worshippers acknowledge his right to reign over them because of his attributes and work as creator, and pay to him alone their homage ; and on the other, that they who legislate over his rights and laws, usurp a dominion over him, and make themselves objects of worship ; and that they who yield to that usurpation and accept creatures as their religious lawgivers, mediators, and redeemers, ascribe to them his prerogatives, and pay them a homage that is due only to him. No construction therefore could be more at war with the great characteristics of the revelation, than that the seven lamps are representatives of angels.

The supposition that they are a symbol of the Holy Spirit, is

not inconsistent with the law that no living creatures can be employed to represent the creator, as lamps have neither intelligence nor life. Their station before the throne exhibits him in the relation ascribed to him in the Scriptures in the work of redemption, as sent by the Father and the Son; and the office denoted by the radiation of light by the lamps, is that which he is represented as filling in the illumination and sanctification of men.

Mr. Stuart represents the living creatures as symbols of the attributes of God. But that is inconsistent alike with the divine nature, the law of symbolization, and the agency ascribed to the living creatures. It implies the greatest of all solecisms, that the attributes of God exist separate from himself. Why else should they be separately symbolized? or how could they consistently with the supposition that the form addressed as the self-existent, eternal, and almighty, truly represents him as such? If the being enthroned truly symbolizes God as self-existent, eternal, and almighty, what necessity could exist of other symbols exterior to himself, representative of his attributes?

But it is as irreconcilable with the law of symbolization as it is with the divine nature. If there be any rule of representation that is indisputable, and the observation of which is indispensable to the interpretation of the visions, it is that agents symbolize agents, and agencies agencies. There is no analogy between an agent and a mere attribute; between a nature of many differing characteristics, and a single characteristic of that or some other nature. Attributes are predicates of agents, and each class or peculiar combination, is characteristic of the class of agents of which it is predicable, and is to be regarded as theirs, as absolutely as their activity, life, or form. If a symbol then be a living agent, nothing can be more certain than that the attributes which are predicable of it belong to itself, and thence if they are divine, demonstrate it to be divine also. His assumption, therefore, that the living creatures symbolize divine attributes, implies not that the attributes of the personage seated on the throne are divine, but that they are themselves divine persons.

It is inconsistent also with the representation that the living creatures fall down and worship him that sits on the throne, and hymn him as the self-existent, eternal, almighty, and all-holy. What can be more incongruous than thus to represent the attributes of the Self-existent as separate agents, bending in homage to his form conceived as symbolizing his mere nature irrespective of his attributes, and ascribing themselves to him!

Mr. Mede and some others regard the living creatures as sym-

bols of the church or congregation of worshippers on earth, and the elders as representatives of the ministers; Mr. Daubuz interprets the living creatures as symbols of the ministers of the church on earth, and the elders as representing the congregation of worshippers; Vitranga exhibits the elders as denoting the rulers of the church, and the living creatures its eminent teachers and ministers through every age. But if they are symbols of the church on earth, then must the throne and he who sat on it be regarded as symbolizing a visible throne and monarch in the church on earth, the temple a scene of worship here, the angels an order of worshippers who are not of the church, and the worship, a worship paid to some being visibly throned in the church on earth. But as there is no one who has here seated himself on a throne in the church, and demanded a worship, but anti-christ, that construction makes the vision a symbol of the Man of Sin, and the idolatrous worship paid to him by the apostate church, which is impossible. None of the agents and actions of the heavenly temple are symbolic of agents and actions on earth. The assumption on which these writers proceed, involves them in like manner in inextricable difficulties in their exposition of many other passages.

Dr. Hammond exhibits him who sat on the throne, as the metropolitan bishop of Judea, as a representative of God; the elders as diocesan bishops of Judea, and the living creatures as four apostles, as symbols of the saints who are to attend the Almighty as assessors in judgment. But that is first to make a creature a symbol of God, which is against analogy; and next to exhibit the living creatures and elders as ascribing the attributes and acts of the deity to a creature, and paying him the highest homage, which is to represent them as guilty of the false worship which the prophecy exhibits as the peculiarity of apostates. There moreover is not only no evidence nor probability of the existence, at the period to which he refers the vision, the reign of Claudius, of either what he denominates a metropolitan bishop at Jerusalem, or twenty-four or any other number of diocesan bishops in Judea; but the most ample demonstration that neither of those orders were in existence at the period of the visions. The earliest mention of a metropolitan is in the acts of the council of Nicea in the fourth century;—the earliest existence of diocesan bishops, of which there is any proof, toward the close of the second.

The annunciation in this and the first vision, that the self-existence, eternity, omnipotence, and work of God as creator,

give him a right to reign, and are the ground on which he founds his government, presents the first great truth of the Apocalypse, in the light of which all the other visions are to be contemplated in order to discern their import. The true worshippers are they who acknowledge and honor him for what he is, and refuse to yield to usurping creatures the homage that is due only to him. The antagonist powers are they who usurp his rights, and claim a worship which supersedes his ; and the apostate worshippers they who yield those usurpers their claims, and ascribe to them prerogatives and honors that belong only to the creator.

SECTION VII.

CHAPTER V. 1-14.

THE DELIVERY OF THE BOOK TO CHRIST.

AND I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne, a book written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and loose its seals? And no one in heaven, nor on the earth, nor under the earth was able to open the book, nor to look at it. And I wept much that no one was found worthy to open the book, nor to look at it. And one of the elders saith to me, Weep not. Behold the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book and its seven seals. And I saw before the throne and the living creatures and within the elders, the Lamb, standing as slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that are sent to all the earth. And he came and took the book from the right hand of him who sat on the throne ; and when he took the book, the four living creatures, and the four-and-twenty elders fell before the Lamb, having every one harps and golden vials full of incense which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open its seals ; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us to our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels in a circle round the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders, and their number was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and

strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and whatever is in the sea, and all that are in them I heard saying, To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the four-and-twenty elders fell and worshipped.

The object of this great scene was to show that Christ is exalted to the throne and exercises the government of the universe; that he attained that exaltation by his work as Redeemer; that thence the right belongs to him alone to reveal to creatures his designs; and that he is to conduct his administration in the redemption of his people according to the eternal purposes of God. That the Lamb who is the eternal Word having seven horns and seven eyes, the symbols of all-perfect dominion and all-perfect knowledge, had been slain, was indicated by the glory to which in consequence of his death his human form was changed at his resurrection. The book was the symbol of the purposes of God. The seals by which it was closed, denoted that his designs in regard to the administration of the church and world, were hidden from creatures; and the summons by the angel, who is worthy to open the book and to loose its seals, that no created being was capable unaided of discerning it, or of a dignity equal to the office of revealing it to the hosts of heaven or the church on earth. The disappointment and tears of the apostle that no one was found worthy to open the book, or to inspect it, bespeak a fervid interest in the divine purposes, and an expectation that great and wonderful events were approaching. The mode is eminently beautiful in which the elder apprized him that the Redeemer was to make known and execute the divine designs. He spoke of him, not as the Self-existent, but as the incarnate Word. Weep not. The Lion who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book and its seven seals. He who assumed our nature has become the head of the church, and is to reign over it as lawgiver and teacher, and complete the work of redemption.

Expositors generally have regarded the Lamb standing as slain, as literally a lamb symbolizing the Redeemer; not the Redeemer himself in his human form, which showed that he had been slain, by the majesty to which in consequence of his death, it was transfigured at his resurrection. But they appear not to have considered that the metaphorical titles by which he is designated in the ancient Scriptures and in the gospels, are appropriated to him as proper names in the Apocalypse. Thus he is in this

passage denominated the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Root of David; and in others, the Word, the Offspring of David, and the Star. In accordance with that usage, the term Lamb in this and the numerous other passages in which it occurs, is to be regarded as merely a proper name of the incarnate Word drawn from his office as a sacrifice. That construction is required also by analogy. It is inconsistent with his deity and office as ruler of the universe, that he should be symbolized by a mere creature and a lamb. A lamb was suited to represent him only in his human and mortal nature, and in the relation of a passive sufferer of a violent death. It had no adaptation to symbolize him as a self-existence, the revealer and executor of the divine purposes, and the ruler and judge of the universe. A mere creature can only symbolize a creature; God alone can represent himself. The Redeemer accordingly appears in his own person in his human nature glorified, in all the visions in which he is seen. In conformity with this, acts are ascribed to him,—the reception of the book, and opening of the seals,—that are proper to his nature and office as the incarnate Word, but wholly inappropriate to a lamb.

The presence of the angels and of the redeemed, shows that the revelation was made to them as well as to men.

The worship of the living creatures and elders on Christ's reception of the book, bespeaks on the one hand in the most emphatic manner his deity, and on the other their sense of the propriety of his exaltation as the head of the church. Thou art worthy to be the revealer and the executor of the divine purposes respecting the salvation of men, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of all nations, and hast made us to our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. It is meet that he should reign and conduct the work of salvation, not only that he may display his deity, and adequacy to the work, and that the universe may behold and acknowledge him as divine, and testify their sense of the rightfulness, wisdom and glory of his work; but also that those whom he has constituted heirs of God and joint heirs with him, and exalted to majestic stations in the conduct of his kingdom, may fill those offices in a conspicuous relation to him as their head, in whose presence in his glorified form alone it is that their nature especially fits them to serve, and will still more pre-eminently fit them when they shall be raised from the grave in a like glorious shape. The responsive ascriptions of the angelic myriads bespeak their perfect knowledge of the deity of Christ, his incarnation and sacri-

fice, the great purposes and influence of his death, and the propriety that he should assume the government of the world, and be the revealer and executor of his designs. The chant of acquiescence that then came from all the distant realms of the universe, and ascriptions both to God and to the Lamb of honor and glory and power forever and ever, is inimitably grand, denoting their acquaintance also with the Redeemer's work, their sense of its infinite importance to God and his empire, their personal and supreme interest in it, and assurance that it is to display his glory in dazzling effulgence, and contribute to the wisdom and blessedness of his kingdom.

A vast and august recognition is thus made in this scene of all the great truths on which the government of the universe and the redemption of men proceed,—the nature, the agency, the relations, the rights of God; the knowledge and celebration of his perfections both by the beings who serve in his presence, and who dwell in his distant realms; the exaltation of the Redeemer to supreme dominion, and exercise of the office of revealer to the heavenly hosts and the church on earth; the suitableness of his assuming that station because of the demonstration it presents of his deity; the appropriate relations to him into which it raises the redeemed who are heirs of God and joint heirs with him; the vindication which the greatness of its results is to form of the propriety of his interposition; and finally the understanding acknowledgment and adoring celebration of these truths by all orders of his intelligent creatures throughout his immeasurable kingdom.

The book was written within and without. Some interpreters, forgetting that the volume was a symbol, have treated it as though it were the Apocalypse itself written by the finger of God, and attempted to distinguish the chapters that were written on the outside. Nothing can be more groundless, or could involve the whole spectacle in more preposterous confusion and unintelligibility. It is to contradict the representative character of the scene, and adopt a rule of construction which is wholly impracticable in respect to most of the symbols. If the book were not a symbol of the purposes of God, but the Apocalypse itself, and its characters those which the prophet afterwards inscribed on his scroll and which form our present Apocalypse, then all the other objects in this and the following scenes must on the same principle be likewise taken as precisely what they are denominated, and without any mystical meaning;—the living creatures, the horsemen with the bow, the sword and the balance, death

and its attendant, and all the monster shapes of the subsequent visions, which were absurd and impossible. That assumption is equally irreconcilable with the mode in which the symbolic objects were presented to the apostle and the whole revelation conducted. They were exhibited to him in vision acting out their representative agency. He says expressly he saw the horsemen go forth as the seals were successively opened, the souls at the altar, the majestic shape ascending from the east with the seal of God, the innumerable company clothed in white robes, and heard the voices of the living creatures, the cry of the martyr spirits, the number of the sealed, and the ascriptions by the palm-bearing multitude of salvation to him that sat on the throne and to the Lamb; not that mere verbal descriptions of them such as he himself wrote, were presented to him. But if those agents were shown him, not on the scroll, but visibly in a distant scene, of what instrumentality to their manifestation was the unfolding of the scroll, or the inscription on it of those voices? Can the proclamation at the opening of the third seal have been read from the scroll; the cry of the martyr spirits, the answer, and the call under the sixth seal of the kings and great men of the earth, the bond and the free, to the rocks to fall, and to the mountains to cover them from the face of him who sat on the throne? Were the addresses of the interpreting angel? If not, how did their inscription in the book contribute to their revelation to the prophet? Were the first five chapters which preceded the opening of the seals, embraced in the volume? Is such a supposition reconcilable with the representation that the whole of its contents were unknown and undiscoverable by creatures? If, as these writers assume, the whole of the events belonging to each seal be not denoted by the symbols of that seal, but partly by others inscribed on the exterior of the scroll, what means are there of determining what those events are? On what grounds that are not wholly arbitrary, and at war with all order and certainty, can it be assumed that the series of events denoted by the second, third and fourth seal, begin after those of its predecessor had closed? But if that assumption be not authorized,—and it is indisputably clear, that they are cotemporary through long periods—on what principle can different classes of cotemporaneous events afterwards revealed, be divided among those cotemporary seals? And finally, if the book were the Apocalypse and not a symbol, why was it not after the visionary exhibition, delivered to the apostle? Why was he directed to write what he saw, rather than copy or deliver to the churches that which was already

written by the pen of the Almighty? The assumption is manifestly embarrassed in every relation with insuperable difficulties.

As then the whole revelation was obviously conducted without any reference to the inscription on the book; as the seals served no other office than to signify that the purposes of God were unknown and undiscernable by creatures; and their opening by the Redeemer no other end, than to show that to him alone belong the power and right to unfold and execute those purposes; and as the law of symbolization itself imperatively requires us to regard the volume as a mere representative; it is manifest that those who deem it the Apocalypse itself, and found their constructions on that assumption, are wholly in error; and the inextricable difficulties in which their theories involve them, exemplify the embarrassments that usually spring from a neglect, in the exposition of the book, of the law of analogy.

SECTION VIII.

CHAPTER VI. 1, 2.

THE FIRST SEAL.

AND I looked when the Lamb had opened one of the seven seals. And I heard one of the four living creatures say, as a voice of thunder, Come. And I looked, and lo, a white horse, and he that sat on him having a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering, and that he might conquer.

There is no indication that the spectacle thus displayed to the apostle was a mere delineation on the scroll. Nor is the description compatible with that hypothesis. So far from it, the symbol, it would seem, did not appear until after the summons by the living creature. Indeed, it was to the horseman undoubtedly, not the prophet, that that summons was addressed. The *και βλεπε*, and see, of the received text, are not admitted in the best editions. The voice of thunder would seem extremely disproportioned if addressed to the apostle; but appropriate, if designed for the angelic armies, whose number was so vast that the stations of many must have been remote, and who yet cannot be supposed to have been required successively to approach the throne, in order to see the scroll. So far from being a mere picture, or verbal description, the rider and horse, it is apparent from every part of the narrative, and from the laws of symbolization,

were living agents. The apostle not only says that there was a white horse, and that he that sat on him had a bow, but that a crown was given to him, and that after his appearance undoubtedly; and that he went forth conquering and that he might conquer; *actions* which could not be represented by a single delineation, and which it were incongruous to ascribe to a mere picture. A fictitious action moreover cannot be a representative of a real one, unless it be acted out in vision before the prophet; nor can an agent be the representative of an action. There is no analogy on which to found such a representation, no relations being more conspicuously the converse of each other, and no dissimilarities more absolute, than those of cause and effect. All the symbols of agents in the Apocalypse are accordingly agents, and all actions of agents represented by corresponding actions of symbols. And that mode of representation is obviously requisite in order to a certainty of meaning. Were there no uniform analogy between the sign and the thing signified,—if a thing incapable of action might both represent a thing like itself and an agent; and an agent, both an agent and a thing incapable of an action; a cause an effect, and an effect a cause,—then as the relations of the symbol to the thing represented might in different instances be exact opposites, opposite constructions would be equally probable, and all certainty therefore of meaning be wholly unattainable. But that the rider and horse were real agents, not a mere picture, is manifest finally from the scene of his agency, which, as it was a scene into which he went forth, and was the theatre of his victories, was the earth, not the mere scroll, nor the heavens. The opening of the seal manifestly then had no other significance than to denote that it was by the act of the Redeemer that the purposes of God about to be unfolded were revealed; and no other instrumentality in the revelation, than that it was the signal for the manifestation in vision to the prophet, of the symbolic spectacle by which it was followed.

The personage on the horse is a warrior, manifestly from his being armed with a bow; an instrument in chief use in the east at that period by cavalry especially, in attacks at a distance. The crown was given him for conquests he had already attained, and denoted that he had gained them for the power from which he drew his authority, and received his crown, not for himself; and that he had conducted his warfare therefore conformably to the ends and laws of his office. Otherwise he would not have received a crown. The office of the horse was simply to exhibit him on the one hand in the attitude in which victorious warriors

appeared when decreed a crown and triumph, and on the other in the exercise of his profession; a mere subsidiary to his exerting a representative agency; as in the vision of the nineteenth chapter, the sword proceeding from the mouth of Christ, is designed merely to indicate the character of the sentence he is to pronounce on his enemies, and the horse on which he is seated, that he is to descend in a manner suitable to his station as a victorious king, to execute that sentence.

The symbol is then drawn from military and civil life in the Roman empire; in which it was customary to grant a triumphal return to the capital, and a crown to a victorious warrior, which, as it was the act of the senate, was a civil act; and the personage taken as the symbol was doubtless Trajan, who, in the year 96, immediately after the period of the visions, being adopted by Nerva and declared by the senate his colleague and successor,¹ marched with a powerful army against the Dacians, gained important victories and conquests, and on his return was decreed a triumph.² Hadrian and the Antonines, who followed him, princes of a similar character, and under whom the empire continued to flourish, may also be considered as embodied in the horseman.

As the symbol is thus drawn from the military and civil customs of the empire, we are to look, in order to find the persons denoted by it, not to the same, but some resembling department of life; precisely as were we foreshown that some agent, having a similitude to a lion, an eagle, or a dragon, was soon to appear on the theatre of the world, we should look, not for the animal itself which was used for exemplification, but for some different agent of resembling characteristics. And where shall we find any such analogous community as the symbol requires, except in the religious world? any such conquerors, except in the faithful ministers of the Christian church? or any such conquests, except in the conversion of worshippers from idols to God? It is to them that we are naturally led by the Revealer, and the great subject of the Apocalypse, and in them and them alone that we find the correspondences which the law of symbolization demands. A warrior who conquered provinces or kingdoms, transferred the allegiance of the vanquished people from their old to new rulers. He placed them under new laws; he impressed a new character on all their civil and military relations. So the minister of Christ who, by proclaiming the gospel, became the instrument of converting individuals and communities to faith in him, transferred

¹ D. Cassii, lib. 68, c. 3, 4. Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. iii.

² D. Cassii, lib. 68, c. 10, 15.

their supreme love from self, and their religious homage from the idol shapes or imaginary deities they had before worshipped, to the true God. He introduced them into a new community. He subjected them to new laws, and worked a radical change in their moral relations.

And no similar agencies were exerted, no like agents existed in any other department of the social world at that period. The ministers of paganism wrought no such changes in that, or the following ages, in large bodies of men either within, or without the Roman empire. The incorporation into the state of new provinces or kingdoms by conquest, brought with it no such revolution in their religion. There were none but idolaters to be vanquished, and the conquered were universally left to continue their homage to the gods they had before worshipped.¹ Nor did the philosophers of that or the following ages, the only other class who can be thought to exhibit such an analogy as the symbol requires, work any such revolution in the principles and practice of communities or large numbers of men. There were no philosophical communities. The number of the lettered and thence of the speculative, was extremely small compared to the multitude. There was no order of men devoted by office to the propagation of philosophy. The philosophy which prevailed at that period could scarcely have rendered tribes that were vanquished, or others more false in faith, or corrupt in morals, than their religion had already made them, and was wholly inefficacious for reformation. False, shadowy, and absurd, unaccompanied by any firm convictions of its doctrines, unattended by any influential sanctions, and in harmony in a large degree with the fashionable idolatries and public and private manners, it at best left their principles and their passions as it found them. The requisite resemblances then are seen in the ministers, and nowhere else, of the Christian church, who make conquests to the Redeemer in accordance with the ends and laws of their office.

The symbol conqueror, like other symbols of men in the prophecy, is the representative, not of an individual merely, but of the pure teachers of Christianity at large, who went forth from the period of the visions, and fulfilled their office conformably to the word of God, assailing with the arrows of truth the hostile armies of idolatry, and subjecting them to the sceptre of Christ.

In correspondence with this construction, the writers of the

¹ *Nam solere Romanos religiones urbium superatarum partim privatim per familias spargere, partim publice consecrari.*—*Arnobii adv. Gentes, lib. iii. c. 39.* Gibbon's *Hist. Decl. and Fall*, chap. ii.

ages that immediately followed the visions, represent that there was a rapid and almost uninterrupted spread of the gospel, from the last years of the first century especially, until the persecution by Decius in the middle of the third, and in an inferior degree to its close. Most of the persecutions of the long space from Domitian to Decius were provincial, of short continuance, and left the large body of the Christian teachers to continue their labors with but little obstruction.¹

This construction is corroborated by the perplexities which embarrass other interpretations.

1. Those who, like Grotius and Rosenmuller, regard it as symbolizing the first acts of the war of Nero and Vespasian against the Jews, or other calamities of that people immediately preceding that war, are obliged to assume that the Apocalypse was written during the reign of Claudius or Nero;—if in the former some forty years, at least, and if in the latter not less than twenty-eight or nine, earlier than the date ascribed to it by the first ecclesiastical writers; or else like Eichhorn, that it was not written until twenty-five or six years after the fall of Jerusalem, and was thence a mere representation of the past, in place of a symbolization of the future.

2. The ascription to it of so early a date, is not only without any adequate historical grounds and against the most reliable testimony, but is irreconcilable with the representation of the Apocalypse respecting the Asiatic churches. The works ascribed to them, the fidelity, the patience, the endurance of persecution as their first character, and at length their decline in love, the rise among them of false teachers, and the apostasy of some to idolatry, imply not only that a period of some length had passed from their first establishment, but a considerable space also after the ministry of Paul at Ephesus had closed. Yet no such period intervened between either the date of his epistle to the Ephesians, or his last interview with the elders on his way to Jerusalem, if the Apocalypse were written during the reign of Claudius or Nero. So far from it, the periods universally assigned to the interview and the epistle, are subsequent to the reign of Claudius, which terminated October 13th, in the year 54;² and the distance from those dates to the commencement or

¹ Justini Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. c. 117: Irenæi adv. hæres. lib. i. c. 10. Tertulliani cont. Jud. c. 7. Apologet. c. 37. Plinii Epist. 97, lib. 10. Lactantii de Just. c. 13. De Mort. Persecut. c. 3. Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 21. Lib. viii. c. 1. Mosheim, Hist. Church, Cent. ii. p. i. chap. i. Cent. iii. p. i. chap. i. Moshemii de rebus Christ. secul. ii. pp. 203, 217.

² Lardner's Credibility, vol. v. p. 518.

close even of the persecution by Nero, is wholly inadequate. His visit to Miletus is usually referred to the year 58,¹ and his epistle to the year 61.² The persecution by Nero began about the middle of November in the year 64,³ and terminated with his death, June 9th, 68.⁴

In neither the Acts nor the epistle is there any intimation of such a decline of the Ephesian Christians from their first love. In place of exhibiting them as already sunk into lukewarmness, or turned to false doctrines, the apostle warned the elders in his farewell at Miletus, that it was after his departure that false teachers were to arise and draw away disciples. His martyrdom is usually assigned to the year 65.⁵ It is incredible therefore that so great a change in their faith and practice could have taken place in so short a period—two or three years.

3. There are no indications in the histories of that period, of any persecution of the church during the reign of Claudius.⁶ Nor is it certain, though probable, that Nero's persecution, which is exhibited as the first,⁷ extended to the Asiatic churches.⁸

4. The calamities of the unbelieving Jews were not of such interest to the Asiatic churches, as to render it probable that so large a portion of the Apocalypse as the seals, all of which the commentators in question, Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, and Rosenmuller, apply to the insurrections, wars, or other calamities of that people, would be devoted to their symbolization.

5. It is incredible that such a symbolization was made after the Jewish war had begun; yet if the revelation be assigned to the last year of Nero, as the war was commenced in the year 66, its first acts preceded it at least one, perhaps two years.⁹

6. There is no correspondence between the events of the Jewish insurrections and wars, and the symbols of the sixth seal. A great earthquake, an obscuration of the sun, an eclipse of the moon, a fall of the stars, a departure of the heavens, a removal of the mountains and islands from their places, denote a univer-

¹ Lardner's Credibility, vol. v. p. 526.

² Ibid. vol. vi. p. 29, 37.

³ Moshemii De reb. Christianorum, cap. 34, p. 107.

⁴ Pagi Crit. in Annal. Baron. anno. 68, n. iii.

⁵ Pagi Crit. in Annal. Bar. anno. 65, no. ii. 67, no. iii. Lardner's Credibil. vol v. p. 535.

⁶ Pagi Crit. in Annal. Baronii, ann. 268, no. vi. an. 269, no. ii.

⁷ Tertulliani Apolog. c. 5. Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 2. Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 25.

⁸ Moshemii de reb. Christ. ante Const. sec. i. c. 35. Pagi Crit. in Annal. Baron. anno. 64, no. iii. iv. v.

⁹ Pagi Crit. in Annal. Baronii. anno. 66, no. ii. no. iii.

sal convulsion of the political world, and overthrow of every form of government. All classes of rulers and all orders of subjects are represented accordingly as overwhelmed with the conviction that their civil and social relations were forever terminated. The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the commanders of a thousand, and the rich and the mighty, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who is able to stand? Not the slightest resemblance subsists between this terrific prediction, and the events of the Jewish war. No kings were interested in that war. No government was overthrown by it. The Jews were not an independent people, but conquered and tributary, and the result of their revolt, after vast slaughters and the destruction of their cities, was their reduction again to submission. Though many were driven into other provinces, and many sold into servitude, yet a vast proportion of the survivors continued to reside in their native land, and again at the distance of sixty years, attempted to throw off the Roman yoke, and met a still more disastrous defeat.

But the demonstration of their error is completed, by the absurd and impossible construction of many of the other symbols, to which the rule on which they proceed must, if legitimate, lead. If as they assume, in looking to the Roman military and civil history for the agents and agencies denoted by the seals, the symbol and that which it symbolizes belong to the same class; then must death on the pale horse and the grave his attendant, denote the entrance on the apocalyptic earth, of a throng and succession of precisely such agents and objects; the monster locusts and horsemen of the trumpets, must foreshow the rise of armies and successions of similar shapes; and the seven-headed and ten-horned wild beast portend a herd and series of such monsters; and no approach to a verification of their views of the prophecy can be made, except by a demonstration of the appearance and agency on the theatre of the empire of those non-existences.

The application of the symbol by Mr. Jurieu and others to Roman emperors of the first, or first and second centuries, is obnoxious to similar objection. They assume that the symbol and the symbolized agent are of the same species, and set aside therefore the law of analogy. The victories and conquests of the emperors of those periods, were of no such significance as to entitle them to a representation in the prophecy. They were of

no higher importance to the empire itself, than many others of a later age that are not noticed in it. They sustained no peculiar relations to the church, no Christians, or but a very inconsiderable number, entering at that period into the Roman armies. They exerted no influence whatever, as far as can be discerned, either to accelerate or retard the spread of the gospel and conversion of individuals or communities. And finally the principle on which that construction is founded, must if legitimate, be taken as the key likewise of every other part of the prophecy, and force us to the conclusion that the symbolizations of the fourth seal, the fifth and sixth trumpets, the seven-headed dragon, the ten-horned and two-horned wild beasts, can only be accomplished by the appearance on the apocalyptic stage, of agents like those monster shapes.

Similar incongruities embarrass their views, who have regarded the horse as symbolizing the Roman people, or armies; not as the mere instrument by which the rider fulfils his office. It is to confound the horse of a warrior, with the associate warriors, that as subordinates conquer with him;—a mere subsidiary by which he more successfully leads his squadrons, with the squadrons themselves which he leads to battle and victory. The white steed rode by Sylla in the battle with the Samnites, was as subsidiary to his office as the sword which he bore, and could no more be made a representative of his cohorts, than the color by which he was distinguished, or the ground on which he trod.

It subverts all certainty in respect to the other parts of the symbol. If the horse be not a mere subsidiary, exhibiting the rider in the exercise of his profession, on what ground can the bow be regarded as denoting the nature of that profession, or the crown the result of his conflicts? What proof is there that he is a warrior, not a civil magistrate, or that his victories were gained in the battle-field, not in the hippodrome?

Mr. Brightman regarded truth as the horseman, and interpreted his conquests of the successes of the Christian apologists during the reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines. But that is to make an intelligent agent, the representative of a mere abstract quality, or characteristic of propositions, which is against analogy.

Grotius regarded the gospel as the horse, and Christ in his kingly character as the rider; Cocceius, the church as the horse, and the horsemen as ecclesiastical teachers and rulers. These incongruous constructions bespeak the same inacquaintance with the principle of symbolic representation, as those interpretations which exhibit the symbol and thing symbolized as of the same species.

Those who have interpreted the symbol as prophetic of the prosperity of the church, have yet placed their construction on mistaken grounds ;—some, as Grotius, Mr. Mede, Mr. Whiston, and Vitringa, seeming to found that solution on the assumption that the personage on the horse is the Son of God, not discerning that he never appears except when accompanied by express designations and symbols of his deity, and that it is unbecoming his dignity that he should be made the representative of his ministers ; and others, as Dean Woodhouse, building their interpretation, not on the laws of symbolization, but on the erroneous assumption that the prophecy foreshadows none but ecclesiastical agents and events.

SECTION IX.

CHAPTER VI. 3-4.

THE SECOND SEAL.

AND when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, Come. And there went forth another a red horse. And to him that sat on him, it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another. And there was given to him a great sword.

The summons by the living creature was undoubtedly addressed in this instance as before to the symbolic agent, not to the prophet.

This horseman is a warrior also. The sword like the bow, is the instrument of contest and dominion, but is more destructive, and as it is used only in close combat, not like the bow at a distance, is employed with greater passion, and is the implement alike of defence, of ambition, and of revenge.

This warrior takes peace from the earth. He is aggressive therefore as well as the former, not occupied in self-defence ; but unlike him employs himself in endeavoring to conquer the empire which it is his office to sustain. He interrupts and destroys the security and peace which he is bound to promote, and grasps at an authority and dominion that do not belong to him. He uses his sword therefore for personal and sinister objects, and against the ends for which it is designed ; and accordingly is not crowned, but only obtains a greater sword, by which his power to

destroy is increased. And in thus taking peace from the earth, he prepares the way for his own destruction. As he conspires against others and slays them, so he is himself conspired against, and thus usurper supplants usurper, and the slaughter of one set of favorites and adherents is quickly followed by the slaughter of another.

This symbol also like the former is taken from military and political life in the Roman empire. Such destroyers of peace and fomentors of slaughter were the long train of conspirators and usurpers that rapidly followed each other from the beginning of the reign of Commodus to the accession of Diocletian; and the individual taken for the symbol is perhaps Quadratus the first in the series, who attempted the assassination of the emperor in the year 183. After Quadratus, Perennis, Maternus, and Cleander having been thwarted in their designs on his life, the plot of Lætus at length succeeded in the year 192.¹ Pertinax who was chosen his successor was immediately conspired against by one of the consuls, and at the end of three months beheaded by the prætorian guards, to whom he owed his elevation. The election of Julian in his place was contested by Albinus in Britain, Niger in Syria, and Severus in Pannonia. Severus having destroyed his competitors Julian, Albinus and Niger, was plotted against by his son Caracalla.² On the accession of Caracalla and Geta, to whom he left the empire, they conspired against each other. Caracalla, after having assassinated Geta, became the victim of his ministers. Macrinus his successor soon fell in the contest with his rival Elagabalus. In less than two years Elagabalus was assassinated by his guards. After a short reign his successor Alexander Severus was conspired against by Maximin and slain. The two Gordians whom the senate elevated as successors to Severus, met a speedy death. Maximin was in the beginning of the fourth year of his reign assassinated by his own troops, and Maximus and Balbinus the successors of the Gordians at Rome, slaughtered by the prætorian guards. The third Gordian was soon dispatched by his successor Philip.³ After a reign of five years Philip was slain in a battle with Decius, whom the legions of Mæsia had invested with the purple. Against Gallus, who on the fall of Decius in the war with the Goths was chosen his successor, Emilianus a successful rival soon rose; and Emilianus, at the end of four months, was dis-

¹ Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. iv.

² Gibbon's Hist., chap. v.

³ Gibbon's Hist. chap. vi. vii.

patched by his competitor Valerian. After the capture of that prince by the Persians, the throne of his son Gallienus was attempted during the eight following years by nineteen usurpers. On the death of Gallienus, the sceptre of Claudius, whom he had nominated his successor, was contested by Areolus : and during the reign of Aurelian, the next in the train, numerous aspirants contended for the empire both in the west and in the east, and revolts continued to mark the short reigns which followed, with the exception of that of Carus, till on the assassination of his son Carinus, the empire submitted to Diocletian.¹

These usurpers and rivals took peace from the earth. They not only rendered the throne and life of the monarch insecure, and the fortunes and lives also of all his powerful adherents, but spread terror, devastation, and slaughter through the whole empire. With the chief fell also his partisans whose station or agency rendered them objects of fear or resentment. The contests between the legions were civil wars, and carried all the mischiefs of a defeat to the provinces whose candidate proved unsuccessful. The magistrates who had favored him were treated as traitors, and the inhabitants surrendered as a legitimate prey to the exasperated passions of the soldiers.²

For the counterpart to the military and political agent in this symbol, we are, as in the former instance, to look to the religious world. As the symbolized agents are not of the same class as the symbol, but of an analogous species, they are not an order that literally bear a sword and gain their victories by force, but that conquer by persuasion and authority, and whose dominion therefore is religious, not military and political. And they are of the Christian church, as there have been no other religious teachers since the date of the visions, that have not relied chiefly or wholly on mere force for the propagation of their doctrines. The pagans employed it to sustain theirs at the period of the revelation, and for several ages after. The Mahométans, the only authors of a new religion, relied on the sword to spread their faith, and propagated it only as they conquered. But the only official weapons of the Christian teachers are those of persuasion and authority. The agents whom the symbol denotes are teachers therefore of the church.

To slay one another with the sword being to destroy by violence,—as the counterpart of the natural life is the spiritual,—to destroy each other's spiritual life by violence, is to sentence to

¹ Gibbon's Hist. chap. x. xi. xii.

² Gibbon's Hist. chap. v.

an exclusion from salvation by what is deemed an authoritative act; and in a still higher sense, to compel one another by the power of their office to embrace an apostate religion, by which they naturally and necessarily perish.

What class then of teachers and rulers is there in the church, in whose agency these peculiarities meet;—a usurpation of powers which Christ has not authorized, an interception thereby of religious peace from the earth, and finally a compulsion of men to apostasy in order to confirm and perpetuate that usurpation.

All these are conspicuous characteristics of diocesan bishops, especially of the Asiatic, African, Greek, and Latin churches.

The bishops of the churches instituted by the apostles were not a separate order from presbyters, as is manifest from the appropriation of the titles bishop and presbyter as equivalent to each other to the same individuals, and the omission in the New Testament of all notice of the institution or existence of a diocesan order. Nor were diocesans introduced into the church until a long period after the apostolic age, manifestly from the fact that no ecclesiastical writings that are entitled to be regarded as genuine, of an earlier date than the latter part of the second century, present any indications of their existence.

As no spacious edifices were erected by Christians for their worship during the first two centuries, and it was inexpedient in seasons of persecution to assemble in large bodies, the converts in the cities were distributed into several congregations which met in the synagogues of the Jews, in private houses, in apartments appropriated to schools, and at length in cemeteries, caves, and other secluded places, where they might hope to escape the notice of their enemies; and the number of presbyters accordingly was increased in proportion to the separate assemblies.

The whole of the communicants of the several congregations of a city were considered as one church, and all their presbyters as presbyters of that church, though each probably statedly taught in a particular assembly.¹ The presbyters were of equal authority. No one had any official precedence of the others. No one had any higher power over his own particular congregation, than each of the others over his. Nor had any one any

¹ That is implied in the letter of Clemens to the Corinthians, written probably within a short period after the Apoccalypse. It is not easy to see how a faction could have ejected some of the presbyters of that church from their stations, except by gaining a majority in the congregations in which they taught. He represents it as the work of a party, not of the church at large.

authority in respect to the church at large, but such as was common to all.

The churches of the several cities were in like manner equal in right and authority, and wholly independent of each other, and neither they nor the presbyters had any legislative power either over themselves or others.

Before however the close of the second century, strifes for distinction and power arose among the presbyters, each one claiming a peculiar right to his own congregation, or those whom he introduced into the church, and endeavoring to retain them under his control independently of the other presbyters and congregations. And to remedy this evil, it was decreed through the church generally, by the councils doubtless which began to be held at that period, that one chosen by the presbyters of their own number and invested with the requisite powers, should be placed over the others, and denominated their bishop. The new office, however, thus instituted, instead of a check to ambition, was a contrivance to gratify it, by creating a power and dignity greatly surpassing any to which mere presbyters could before aspire; and accordingly inflamed in a proportional degree in both orders the desire of conspicuity, honor, wealth, and influence, and soon gave rise to intrigues, rivalries, and contests, that were fatal to the peace of the church and the empire, and has continued to generate them through every subsequent age.

That such was the origin of the order, is asserted or implied by several of the most distinguished writers who flourished soon after the nationalization of the church. Thus Jerome: "A presbyter therefore is the same as a bishop, and before by the instigation of the devil religious parties were formed, and it was said among the people, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, the churches were governed by the common council of the presbyters. But afterwards when every one regarded those whom he baptized as his own, not Christ's, it was decreed through the whole world, that one chosen from the presbyters should be placed over the others, that he might be charged with the whole care of the church, and the occasions of schism removed. Does any think it is merely our opinion, not the representation of the Scriptures, that bishop and presbyter are one, the one being the title of age, and the other of office. Let him read the words of Paul to the Philippians: Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, grace to you

and peace. Philippi is a city of Macedonia, and there surely cannot have been in one city many bishops of the kind now denoted by that title. But as at that time bishops were the same as those who were called presbyters, he denominated them indifferently bishops and presbyters. If this still seem doubtful to any one, let it be confirmed by another proof. It is written in the Acts of the apostles, that when Paul had reached Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and called the presbyters of the church of that city, to whom on their arrival among other things he said, Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit placed you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. Here notice carefully, that those whom he calls presbyters of the single city Ephesus, he afterwards denominates bishops."

"These things we have quoted that we might show that among the ancients presbyters and bishops were the same, but that gradually, in order that the germs of dissensions might be extirpated, the whole care was devolved on one. As therefore the presbyters know that it is by the custom of the church that they are subjected to him who is placed over them, so the bishops should know that it is rather by custom than a veritable divine appointment, that they are superior to presbyters, and ought to govern the church in common."¹

¹ Idem est ergo presbyter, qui episcopus, et antequam Diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis: Ego sum Pauli, ego Apollo, ego autem Cephæ, communi presbyterorum consilio ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat, suos putabat esse, non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiæ cura pertineret, et schismatum semina tollerentur. Putat aliquis non scripturarum sed nostram esse sententiam, episcopum et presbyterum unum esse, et aliud ætatis, aliud esse nomen officii, relegat Apostoli ad Phillippenses verba dicentis: Paulus et Timotheus servi Jesu Christi, omnibus sanctis in Christo Jesu, qui sunt Phillippis cum episcopis et diaconis, gratia vobis et pax et reliqua. Phillippi una est urbs Macedoniae, et certe in una civitate plures, ut nuncupantur, episcopi esse non poterant. Sed quia eosdem episcopos illo tempore quos et presbyteros appellabant, propterea indifferenter de episcopis quasi de presbyteris est locutus. Adhuc hoc alicui videatur ambiguum, nisi altero testimonio comprobetur. In Actibus apostolorum scriptum est, quod cum venisset apostolus Miletum, emisit Ephesum et vocaverit presbyteros ecclesiæ ejusdem, quibus postea inter cætera sit locutus: Attendite vobis, et omni gregi, in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus posuit episcopos, pascere ecclesiam Domini, quam acquisivit per sanguinem suum. Et hic diligentius observate, quomodo unius civitatis Ephesi presbyteros vocans, postea eosdem episcopos dixerit.—Hæc propterea ut ostenderemus apud veteres eosdem fuisse presbyteros quos et episcopos; paulatim vero ut dissensionum plantaria evellerentur, ad unum omnem sollicitudinem esse delatam. Sicut ergo presbyteri sciunt se ex ecclesiæ consuetudine ei qui sibi præpositus fuerit esse subjectos, ita episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine quam dispositionis dominicæ veritate presbyteris esse majores, et in commune debere ecclesiam regere.—Comment. in Epist. ad Titum cap. I.

Other passages might be added from Jerome, Chrysostom, and Theodoret, indicating the identity of the primitive bishops and presbyters, and asserting or implying that the institution of dioceses was the work of a later age.

The order thus had its origin as the symbol indicates, in a disposition of the ministers of the church to make their office the instrument of ambition, and appropriate the flock of Christ to themselves. Instead however of restraining, it gratified and inflamed in a tenfold degree the passions it was designed to check, and led soon not only to the usurpation of powers that belong properly to presbyters, but to the assumption of the prerogatives of God. Thus in place of acting as the representatives and agents of the presbyters, which was originally their office, they soon arrogated an absolute jurisdiction over them, and assumed the sole right of ruling and of ordaining to sacred offices.

But by far the most momentous of their usurpations, was their assumption of power to legislate over the church, and thence over the will and rights of God. This usurpation was involved in their arrogation of authority to define or determine what the doctrines are of the Scriptures, to institute rites of worship, and to enforce their legislative acts as obligatory on the church. They therein treated the rights and laws of God as subject to their will, as wholly without validity when not in accordance with their enactments, and as indebted therefore for whatever authority they possessed, to their concurrence and sanction. No arrogation could indeed be more unauthorized and impious. The proper sphere of human rulers is the relations of men to one another, not their relations to God. When they extend their laws over their relations to him, they in fact legislate over his rights and him, as truly as over their fellow men. But no assumption can be more solecistical than that a subject has the right to legislate over the laws of his legitimate and supreme ruler, and enlarge, diminish, modify, contradict or rescind them as he may think proper. It is to assume not only that he is equal, but superior to his lawgiver. Yet such was their arrogation. Otherwise their dictation could have been nothing but advice or the expression of opinion, and could have had no influence on the duty of the church to regard God as the only religious lawgiver, and receive his will as of itself and alone supremely obligatory. They accordingly imposed their definitions and canons on the church, as of absolute authority. "Let all who dare to disannul the decree of the great and holy synod assembled at Nicæa in the presence of the emperor Constantine respecting the feast of the passover, be debarred

from communion and excommunicated from the church!"¹ They treated a dissent from them as of the same guilt, as the rejection or violation of the known will of God. "The violators of the canons are severely sentenced by the pious fathers, and condemned by the Holy Spirit by whose inspiration and gift they were dictated; for they who not of necessity but spontaneously transgress or impeach them, or concur with their violators, are not improperly regarded as blaspheming the Holy Spirit."² "Like the four volumes of the holy gospel, I receive and venerate the four councils, the Nicene in which the dogma of Arius was overthrown, the Constantinopolitan in which the error of Eunomius and Macedonius was censured, the first Ephesian in which the impiety of Nestorius was condemned, and that of Chalcedon which denounced the depravity of Eutyches."³ "I receive the six holy general councils and their godlike dogmas and doctrines as delivered to us by divine inspiration."⁴ They denied or abrogated all the great moral laws which he has imposed, and important doctrines of his word, substituted other doctrines and laws in their place, and introduced innumerable other beings, real or imaginary, and material forms as objects of worship. The second council of Nicæa sanctioned the invocation of saints and the worship of images. Thus Tarasius the patriarch of Constantinople whose creed was approved by the synod. "I invoke the intercessions of the most holy and spotless queen mother of God, and ever virgin Mary, of the holy angels also, and most holy apostles, prophets, martyrs, confessors and teachers, and salute their venerable images."⁵ Theodore of Jerusalem also: "We receive

¹ Synodi Antioch. Can. I. Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 1307.

² Violatores voluntarii canonum graviter a sanctis patribus judicantur et a Spiritu Sancto cujus instinctu ac dono dictati sunt, damnantur; quoniam blasphemare Spiritum Sanctum non incongrue videntur qui contra eosdem sanctos canones, non necessitate compulsi, ut præfixum est, aliquid aut proterve agunt, aut loqui presumunt, aut facere volentibus sponti consentiunt.—Labbei Con. tom. iii. p. 423. Gratiani Decret., Causa xxv. c. v.

³ Sicut sancti evangelii quatuor libros, sic quatuor concilia suscipere et venerare me fateor, Nicænum scilicet in quo perversum Arii dogma destruitur; Constantinopolitanum quoque in quo Eunomii et Macedonii error vincitur; Ephesinum etiam primum in quo Nestorii impietas judicatur; Chalcedonense vero in quo Eutychis et Dioscorique pravitas reprobatur.—Gratiani Decret. Dist. xv. c. 2.

⁴ Labbei Concil. tom. xii. p. 1124. The creed also of Theodore patriarch of Jerusalem which, like the profession of Tarasius from which the preceding extract is taken, was ratified by the synod. "The six holy general councils which were assembled through the Holy Spirit in opposition to every heresy of whatever place or time, we also receive and confirm, in proclaiming which the churches of the orthodox throughout the world are established in their accurate and inspired dogmas, receiving what they received, and rejecting what they rejected."—p. 1138, 1139.

⁵ Labbei Concil. tom. xii. p. 1123.

and embrace the apostolical traditions of the church by which we are taught to salute, honor and worship the saints, venerating them as the servants, friends and children of God."¹ So likewise the fourth Lateran council and the council of Trent. "The holy synod commands all bishops and others sustaining the office of teachers, that according to the usage of the Catholic and apostolic church from the earliest ages of the Christian religion, the consent of the holy fathers and decrees of sacred councils, they instruct the faithful in respect to the intercession and invocation of the saints, the honor of relics, and the legitimate use of images; teaching them that the saints reigning with Christ offer their prayers for men to God; that it is proper and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers for aid, in order to the benefits which are to be obtained from God through his son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Saviour; and that they entertain an impious sentiment who deny that they are to be invoked, or assert that they do not pray for men, or that to ask their prayers for us as individuals is idolatry, or contrary to the word of God, adverse to the honor of Jesus Christ the only mediator between God and men, or foolish. Also that the sacred bodies of the holy martyrs and others living with Christ, which were his living members and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and are to be raised by him to eternal life and glory, are to be venerated by the faithful, many benefits being thereby procured from God: and that they are altogether to be condemned who affirm that homage and honor are not due to their relics, that no benefit arises from honoring them or other sacred monuments, or that it is vain to celebrate their memory in order to obtain their aid; as the church has heretofore condemned and now denounces them again. That images moreover of Christ, of the virgin mother of God, and of other saints, are to be kept and continued in temples especially, and due honor and homage paid to them; not that it should be believed there is any divinity or virtue in them for which they should be worshipped, or that any thing is to be sought from them, or that trust is to be placed in them, as was formerly done by the pagans who put their hope in idols; but because the honor shown them is referred to the prototypes which they represent, so that we adore Christ through the images which we kiss and before which we uncover the head and kneel, and pay homage to the saints whose similitude they bear." They denied that the Scriptures are the only legitimate rule of faith and worship, exalted the canons of councils, the opin-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xii. p. 1143.

² Concil. Trident, Sess. xxv.

ions of the fathers, and the decrees of the pope to an equal authority, and licensed the violation of all the laws of God and man by the authorization of indulgences. "Moreover the holy synod in order to restrain presumptuous dispositions, decrees that no one relying on his own wisdom, shall presume in matters of faith and customs that pertain to the support of Christian doctrine, to distort the sacred Scriptures to his own opinion, or interpret them contrary to that sense which the holy mother church has held and holds, whose it is to judge in respect to the true import and exposition of the sacred word, or contrary to the unanimous consent of the fathers, even although interpretations of that kind should never be made public. Let whoever does otherwise be reported by the usual officers and punished according to the laws."¹ "Since the power of conferring indulgences² has been conceded by Christ to the church, and she has exercised it from the earliest ages, the holy synod teaches and enjoins that the use of them, highly salutary to the Christian people, and sanctioned by the holy councils, is to be continued in the church, and pronounces an anathema on those who either assert that they are useless, or deny that the church has power to confer them."³ All the other false doctrines and superstitious and impious rites of the ancient and modern Asiatic Greek and Latin churches, have in like manner been legalized and enforced by canons of synods or decrees of patriarchs and popes, and a boundless demonstration furnished that the right of legislation which they have thus assumed, involves in practice as well as principle, an arrogation of absolute authority over the laws and prerogatives of God.

In the exercise of the stupendous powers thus usurped, they took peace from the earth by animosities, rivalries, contests, and endeavors to conquer and destroy each other officially; by tyranny over their inferiors, the persecution of those who refused submission to their dictation, encroachment on the civil powers, and quarrels with monarchs and princes, analogous to the revolts, strifes, battles and slaughters in the empire, of which in the second and third century political and military usurpers were the authors.

The spirit with which they ruled their dioceses within a short period of their institution of the office, is indicated by Cyprian in his letter to Cornelius, in which he represents all the heresies and schisms that had arisen, as having sprung from a refusal to

¹ Concil. Trident, Sess. iv.

² An indulgence is a release from obligation to law, and is either a license to sin with impunity, or an exemption from liability for sins already committed.

³ Concil. Trident, de Indul. Sess. xxv.

acknowledge the bishop alone as a priest and judge in the church in the place of Christ; which, however extravagant, reveals the feeling which he exhibits in many of his letters, and which became common to his order, that every disobedience to the will of the bishop and every exercise of the sacred office without his permission, was a violation of his rights, rebellion against God, and a just ground of the deprivation of office and excommunication with which they then began to visit those who dissented from their doctrines, or refused subjection to their authority.¹ That love of power, pride, discord, strife, and tyranny, soon became their characteristics, is shown by Eusebius, who represents their ambition, abuse of their authority by the introduction of unworthy persons into the sacred office, and contentiousness in the period immediately preceding the persecution by Diocletian, as too discreditable to the church to be recorded.² Sozomen exhibits them as accustomed immediately on being freed from persecution by the civil powers, to engage in disputes and contentions with one another.³ Alexander of Alexandria, represents ambition and avarice as perpetually exciting bad men to intrigue for the great churches.⁴ Chrysostom presents a frightful picture of the influence of the office from the passions to which it gives birth. He exhibits the mind of the priest as ruffled by waves more violent than those which tempestuous winds excite on the sea; that the first dangers which he is called to encounter are those of vain-glory, more fatal than the rock of the syrens; that to be installed in the office is like being exposed to perpetual laceration by those monsters; and that the ambition, anger, strife, envy, jealousy, and detraction that attend it, are so many furies that rend and devour the soul.⁵

That their ambition soon led to collision and excited distractions in the church, is indicated by the canons of councils and forged documents which were employed to restrain their usurpation of each other's prerogatives, and encroachment on one another's jurisdiction. "Let not a bishop presume to make an

¹ Neque enim aliunde hæreses obortæ sunt, aut nata sunt schismata, quam inde, quod sacerdoti Dei non obtemperatur, nec unus in ecclesia ad tempus sacerdos et ad tempus iudex vice Christi cogitatur: cui si secundum magisteria divina obtemperaret fraternitas universa, nemo adversum sacerdotum collegium quidquam moveret, nemo post divinum iudicium, post populi suffragium, post coepiscoporum consensum, iudicem se, jam non episcopi, sed Dei faceret, nemo discidio unitatis Christi ecclesiam scinderet.—Epist. 59. See also Epist. 66.

² Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. viii. c. 1, 2. De Martyribus, c. 12.

³ Sozomeni Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 4.

⁴ Theodoriti Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 4.

⁵ De Sacerdot. lib. iii. c. 9.

ordination in cities or rural places not subject to him. Should he be convicted of having done it without the approbation of those who hold those cities or villages, let him be deposed, and those also whom he has ordained."¹ "Let no bishop presume to pass from one province into another and ordain any to the sacred office, unless by a written invitation from the metropolitan and subordinate bishops of the province which he enters. Should he without a call proceed to ordain persons and administer ecclesiastical affairs that do not belong to him, his acts are without authority, and as a fit punishment for his disorderly and presumptuous attempt, he is deposed by this holy synod."² A large part of the acts of the first councils of which we have any memorials, and the forged canons, constitutions, and decretals ascribed to the apostles, and the bishops of Rome of the second, third, and fourth centuries, are in like manner designed to repress their lawless ambition of power and disposition to encroach on each other's prerogatives. The usurping spirit which thus characterized the order, accordingly either gave birth to most of the dissensions, disgraceful strifes, and bloody quarrels which agitated and wasted the church through a long succession of ages, or raised the differences in faith and practice that sprung from other causes into a factitious importance, and made them the occasions of violent discord, exacerbated animosities, and the deposition and ejection of one another from the churches. It was thus the imperious and domineering spirit of Victor, bishop of Rome, that near the close of the second century rendered the differences of the east and west in respect to the day on which Easter was to be observed, the occasion of the passionate contests, enmities, and excommunications of each other with which the church was distracted and disgraced on that subject. His attempt to compel the churches of the east to conform to the west, was pronounced by the great body of the bishops of the age an unauthorized arrogation of power; and his debarring them, on their refusing obedience to his mandate, from communion with those of his patriarchate, rebuked as a wanton violation of the peace of the church.³

The violent contests with which the churches, first of Africa, and at length of Europe and Asia, were for generations agitated in respect to the rebaptism of those who were received from dissenting sects, were occasioned in a chief degree by the claims of the bishops to legislative power over the church, and endeavor

¹ Canon Apost. can. xxxiv. Labbei, tom. i. p. 35.

² Concil. Antioch i. can. xiii. Labbei, tom. ii. p. 1314.

³ Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. v. c. 24.

to enforce their will as of divine authority. Those of each party denounced and excommunicated their opponents as heretics, and endeavored to induce the church at large to unite in debarring them from fellowship. How violent the passions and language of Cyprian sometimes were, though more moderate than many, may be seen from passages like the following. He says of those who rejected the doctrine he maintained respecting the power of bishops, the unity of the church, and baptism: "Is God honored by the friend of heretics and enemy of Christians, who thinks the priests of God who keep the truth of Christ and the unity of the church, are to be debarred from communion? If that is honoring him, if his fear and discipline are in that manner maintained by his worshippers and priests, let us throw down our arms, let us yield our hands to be bound, let us deliver to the devil the institution of the gospel, the appointment of Christ, the majesty of God; let the oaths of fidelity in the sacred warfare be abrogated, let the standards of the heavenly camp be surrendered, let the church succumb and yield to heretics, light to darkness, truth to perfidy, hope to despair, immortality to death, Christ to anti-christ."¹

It was ambition of the episcopal chair at Rome, that gave birth about the middle of the third century to the contest between Novatian and Cornelius, which led to the ordination of Novatian as an anti-pope, the formation of the party which bore his name, and thence to strifes and violences which tore and disgraced the churches of Italy, Africa, and Asia, in a measure, for many centuries.²

The adherents of Novatian soon becoming numerous, and organized under their own bishops, the contest between them and their antagonists degenerated in a large degree into a mere struggle for power, in the progress of which they not only excommunicated each other as heretics, but excited the civil magistrates to enforce their anathemas by proscription, confiscation, and banishment.³

The still more unhappy schism of the Donatists was originated likewise by the bishops, and owed to their ambition, arrogance, and obstinacy the immeasurable evils which it drew in its train. The bishop of Carthage dying in the year 311, at the instigation

¹ Epist. 74, c. 8.

² Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 43. Socratis E. H. lib. ii. c. 38, lib. iv. c. 9, lib. vii. c. 9, 11. Sozomeni E. H. lib. ii. c. 32. Cypriani Epist. 50, 60.

³ At the distance of eighty years from the schism, Constantine granted them toleration and legalized their possession of the churches, cemeteries and other property which they had acquired during their separation. Codicis Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. v. l. 2.

of two presbyters who aspired to the office, an election and institution of a successor was held by the bishops of the vicinity, before the arrival of those summoned from Numidia, who had been accustomed to take part in the election and ordination. On their arrival, who were seventy in number, they, and especially their primate, complained of the violation of their rights in the induction of a bishop without their concurrence, and encouraged by a faction organized by the disappointed candidates and other enemies of Cæcilianus the new bishop, summoned him before them, and on his disregarding their call, deposed him and elected and ordained another in his place. *Hinc schismatis ac dissensionis initium; sic altare contra altare erectum est*: such was the origin of the schism. They then addressed letters to all the churches of Africa, in which to justify themselves, they accused the bishop who ordained Cæcilianus of having surrendered the Scriptures to the heathen magistrates,—an offence of which their primate and several of the others had been guilty,—and become incapable thereby of inducting into the sacred office, pronounced his ordination invalid, and enjoined them to exclude him from their communion, and acknowledge Majorinus, whom they had ordained his rival, as the only legitimate bishop.

Those representations from so numerous a council commanding the belief of great numbers, the whole African church became divided into two parties, and a violent contest arose between the antagonist primates to secure the acquiescence of their subordinates, maintain their authority, and gain possession of the church edifices and property, in which all the arts of fraud, detraction, and demagoguism were employed, especially by the Donatist faction, on a boundless scale, and violences, robberies, assassinations, and slaughters perpetrated, that are scarcely equalled in the history of any other people. Several councils were called by Constantine for the purpose of hearing their accusations of Cæcilianus, and remedying their difficulties, and several synods held by the Catholic bishops of Africa to effect a reconciliation, but without success. The bishops on either side, but especially the Donatists, exacerbated by intolerance, inflamed with ambition, and embittered by mutual injuries, strove rather to perpetuate than terminate the strife. The Donatist bishops not unfrequently headed the bloody bands of the Circumcellions in the robbery and abuse of the helpless, the destruction of churches, the promiscuous slaughter of families and communities, and the conflagration of villages and cities;¹ and continued

¹ S. Optati, *De Schis. Donat. lib. i. Augustini Oper. tom. ix. p. 594.*

the war of revenge and blood, till in the eighth century both parties were swept from existence by the sword of the Saracens.¹ The principal dissensions and schisms of the Donatists themselves originated in like manner with the bishops, and that especially between the Primianists and Maximianists, which commencing in an uncanonical deposition of Maximian and others by Primian, led to the deposition of Primian by one synod, and the substitution of Maximian in his place, and the condemnation of Maximian and those who ordained him by another, and thence to a strife between the rivals, which was marked like the contest of the party with the Catholics, by infuriate passions and bloody tumults.²

The schism of the Melitians, in the year 306, had its origin in like manner in a deposition of Melitius, the bishop of Lycopolis, in upper Egypt, by the bishop of Alexandria. The party of Melitius soon becoming powerful, a violent war of denunciation was continued for several years, and the church throughout Egypt, and the neighboring provinces, in a degree embroiled in the contest.³

The dissensions respecting the divine nature commenced not long after by Arius, whether they had their origin, as the bishop of Alexandria represented, in the disappointment of his ambition of that see,⁴ or in a conviction of the truth of the doctrine which he advanced, soon degenerated into a strife for power between the bishops of the two parties, and a war of prerogatives. His deposition and denunciation by Alexander of Alexandria, led to the organization of a large party, embracing many prelates of great talents and authority in the eastern provinces, and excited disputations and contests throughout the whole church,⁵ so serious, as to induce the emperor, at the recommendation of the orthodox bishops, to summon the council of Nicæa, and to ratify the creed and canons, which it adopted for the government of the church in its new organization as nationalized, and enforce them on Arius and his adherents by the penalties of deposition and banishment. The usurpation by the prince of authority over the faith of the church, being thus sanctioned by the bishops, and the deprivation at his will of its ministers justified and applauded, his religious opinions, which as they varied changed the relations

¹ Gibbon's Hist. chap. xxi. and xxxiii.

² Augustini in Psal. xxxvi. tom. iv. pp. 279, 280. Contra Crescon, lib. iv. c. 4.

³ Soerat. Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 6, c. 9. Sozom. Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 24. Theodoriti, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 9.

⁴ Theodoriti, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 4.

⁵ Theod. Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 6.

of the antagonist parties from authority to degradation, or from degradation to authority, became invested with the utmost importance, and gave birth to boundless intrigues and cabals to sway him to the faith of the respective parties, in order to secure thereby the honors and emoluments of power. The decrees of the synod accordingly, his edicts, and the deposition and banishment of the Arian prelates who refused the legalized creed, so far from terminating the contest, only excited their party to the most artful and strenuous endeavors to change the judgment of the emperor, and lead him to regard them, if not with approval, at least with commiseration; and among those expedients, one of the most efficient was the false imputation of infamous crimes to their great antagonist the patriarch of Alexandria, and at a later period to the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, and Rome, and the prelates of other principal dioceses; and their intrigues were so successful as to lead repeatedly to the ejection of the orthodox from their sees, and the substitution of Arians in their place, and to the deposition on the other hand and banishment of the Arians, and reinstallment of their antagonists. The emperors Constantine, Constantius, Jovian, Valentinian, Valens, Theodosius, Honorius, Arcadius, and a long line of princes on the Greek throne, became in a great degree the instruments of the ambitious and domineering prelates.¹ As the orthodox when in the majority had persecuted the Arians, so the latter on their accession to power in the reigns of Constantius and Valens, persecuted their antagonists, and with a violence and mercilessness that had scarcely been equalled by the pagans;² and were themselves again, on the elevation of Theodosius, deposed, banished, and subjected to all the evils of a relentless persecution.³ Antago-

¹ Hosii Epist. ad Constant. Labbei Concil., tom. iii. p. 246.

² "Macedonius having obtained the patriarchal chair of Constantinople, inflicted innumerable evils on those who did not choose to adopt his sentiments, and on Novatians as well as Catholics. Many bishops who were distinguished for piety, were seized and put to the torture, because they refused to communicate with him, and after being tortured, were compelled by him to partake of the eucharist by violently forcing the elements into their mouths. Women also and children were seized and forced to receive baptism. If any refused or spoke in opposition to it, scourgings immediately followed, and after scourgings, chains, imprisonment, and other dreadful severities, among which was the eradication of the breasts by the saw, the knife, or the application of eggs raised to a burning heat;—a species of torture never used by the pagans, and known only to those who professed to be Christians." Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 38. His attempt to force the Novatians of Paphlagonia to adopt his creed, led to a battle with the imperial troops which he employed, and the slaughter of great numbers on both sides. Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 38.

³ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. i. l. 2.

nist councils alternately denounced anathemas on each other;¹ aged bishops were scourged² into an assent, against their principles, to the legalized faith;³ unwelcome prelates inducted into their sees and aided in their merciless tyranny by military bands;⁴ and the populace of the great cities excited to the demolition of churches, the resistance of the magistrates, insurrections, and bloodshed; and thus through a long tract of years, not only all freedom of opinion and security of office withdrawn from the clergy, but all liberty of thought and safety of person taken from the church at large.⁵ The bishops of the several sects into

¹ Most of the councils which defined doctrines and imposed creeds, denounced anathemas on dissentients from their faith.

² Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 31.

³ Ubique autem scandala, ubique schismata, ubique perfidia sunt. Hinc illud est ut ad professionem subscribendæ fidei aliqui eorum, qui ante aliud scripserant cogentur. Hilarii de Synodis c. 63. Athanasii Epist. ad Solitar. op. tom. i. p. 815.

⁴ Macedonius was placed on the episcopal throne at Constantinople by the prætorian prefect and a military guard, and upwards of three thousand of the populace slain in the tumult which it occasioned. Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 16.

Gregory was escorted by troops to Alexandria and installed by violence, and by his outrages provoked the populace to fire the church. Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 11.

George the Cappadocian was put in possession of the see of Alexandria by a military force, and employed troops and the mob to incarcerate the virgins, chain and guard the bishops, break open and plunder the houses of orphans and widows, drive the orthodox from the cemeteries in which they had assembled for worship, lacerate the faces of young women and hold them to a fire to compel them to profess themselves Arians, and scourge men to death with palm boughs armed with sharp points, and prevent their friends from interring their bodies. Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 28. Athanasii Epist. ad Solitar. op. tom. i. p. 815, 816.

⁶ The power they assumed when assembled in synods and conferred on metropolitans, exarchs and patriarchs, of depriving one another of office, was exercised in the most arbitrary and remorseless manner, and proved wholly destructive of peace and security. A large proportion of those who attained the episcopal chair during the hundred years that followed the nationalization of the church, were divested of their authority and expelled from their sees. Athanasius of Alexandria was deposed three times and driven into exile. Gregory his successor was soon set aside by an Arian synod, and George substituted in his place, who, after having transported fifteen of the bishops of his patriarchate into exile, and induced more than twice that number to elude his vengeance by flight, was himself deposed by the synod of Seleucia, and finally perished by assassination. Peter, who was elevated to the see on the death of Athanasius, was soon forced to resign it to Lucius, and Lucius, after a short reign, to relinquish it again to Peter.

Paul, the patriarch of Constantinople, was four times deposed, and finally slain; his successor Macedonius driven from his see twice, Chrysostom twice, and Evagrius and Demophilus once each. The synod of Serdica deposed Theodore of Heraclea, Narcissus of Neredia, Stephen of Antioch, George of Laodicea, Menophantes of Ephesus, Ursacius of Singidunum, Valens of Mursa, and Patrophilus of Scythopolis; while the eastern bishops who refused to meet with that synod excommunicated Hosius of Corduba, Julius of Rome, and several others.

The synod of Seleucia deposed Acacius of Cæsarea, Uranius of Tyre, Eudoxius

which the Arians became divided in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, were embroiled in similar contests, and hurled denun-

of Antioch, Theodulus of Chæretapor, Theodosius of Philadelphia, Evagrius of Mytilene, Leontius of Tripoli, Auxentius, Caius, and several others.

At different periods Eustathius of Antioch, Marcellus and Basil of Ancyra, Photinus of Sirmium, Liberius of Rome, Elusius of Cyzicum, Dracontius of Pergamos, Nerona of Seleucia, Cyril of Jerusalem, Eustathius of Sebaste, Dyonisius of Milan, Hilary of Poitiers, Gregory of Nyssa, Eusebius of Vercelli, were ejected from their stations, besides a crowd both in the east and in the west, whose names have not come down to us. Valens expelled nearly all the orthodox in the churches of Asia Minor—Socratis, H. E. lib. iv. c. 17; Gratian the Eunomians and Photinians in those of Europe—Socratis, H. E. lib. v. c. 2; and Theodosius all in both empires who were not of the Nicene faith—Codex. Theod. lib. xvi. tit. i. c. 2. Gregory Naziansen and Basil of Cæsarea appear to have been the only conspicuous prelates of their period who were not ejected from their sees. Basil was long threatened, and escaped at first by a favorable impression made by his intrepidity on the emperor, and finally it is probable by death; while Gregory evaded deposition by yielding to the intrigues which were employed to induce him to resign.

In the next age, the war of deposition was resumed, and at the council of Ephesus, Cyril and his party deposed Nestorius of Constantinople, and separated John of Antioch and thirty-six others from the communion of the church, while John of Antioch and his adherents deposed Cyril of Alexandria, and Memnon of Ephesus, excommunicated the bishops, a hundred or more in number, who supported them, and procured the banishment of a great number of the party of Nestorius, as well as of Cyril; and a similar strife of ambition and vengeance was continued by their successors through a long series of ages. Though many of those prelates were wholly unworthy of their stations, yet their expulsion was not usually founded on their demerits, but was the work of party spirit, resentment, and an ambition of conspicuity and power. Socratis Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 42.

The ambition, recklessness, and profligacy ascribed by Basil to the prelates of his age, continued to disgrace the order for a long period. "The aspiring who are not restrained by the fear of God, intrude into the highest stations, and promotion has become the reward of impiety, so that he who blasphemes the most furiously is regarded as the best qualified to be the bishop of the people. The sanctity that befits the priesthood has disappeared; they are no longer pastors who feed the flock of the Lord with knowledge, but the ambitious and profligate, who appropriate to their pleasures what should be distributed to the poor. The canons are no longer strictly observed, but a large license is allowed to sin; they who owe their advancement to power, to the passions of men, naturally repaying the favor by yielding to their indulgence. The law is not enforced, but every one walks according to the desire of his own heart, and wickedness has become excessive. No warnings are given to the people; they who are in authority being the slaves of those to whom they owe their promotion, and restrained from speaking freely. When projecting war with one another, they are accustomed to veil their private enmities under the pretence that they are contending for religion. Some, to avoid reprehension for their disgraceful conduct, endeavor to divert the people from the notice of their crimes by embroiling them in mutual contentions, and the fear that peace would lead to their exposure, will induce them to continue the war. While the unbelieving laugh at these things, the weak are shaken, and they even who have faith are made to doubt, for they not only are not furnished with any solid instruction, but are cheated of their knowledge by these malignant perverters of the word. In the mean time, the lips of the pious are silenced, while every blaspheming tongue is at liberty. Sacred things are so profaned that the sound part of the people avoid the houses of prayer, as schools of impiety, and retreating to secluded places, lift up their hands to God with groans and tears. But the news must have reached you that the people of

ciations and anathemas at each other with an equal pride and ferocity.

The organization of the church by Constantine as a national establishment, and investiture of the patriarchs of the capital cities with a legal jurisdiction over the bishops of their provinces, rendered those sees the objects of a still greater ambition, and gave birth to new and more rancorous contests between the great prelates and their subordinates. The elections of the bishops of the great cities were frequently disgraced by insurrections and bloodshed, and the patriarchs of Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, animated by a restless jealousy of each other, and ambition of encroaching on one another's dominion. It was this insatiable thirst of power that gave birth to the long contests of the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople, and led, after the most exacerbated reproaches, accusations, and anathemas, to the separation which has now continued near a thousand years. On the other hand, the confirmation of their authority by the nationalization of the church, and enforcement of their canons and decrees by civil penalties, enabled the bishops by the imposition of false doctrines, the institution of superstitious and idolatrous rites, and the exaction of immense revenues to inflict new inquietudes on the church at large. They destroyed the peace of myriads and millions by the injunction of celibacy, by the imposition of cruel penances, by compelling a participation in rites that were felt to be idolatrous, by the tyranny of the confessional, by levying enormous exactions as the price of exemption from the penalties of violating the civil and canon laws.

Several of the councils themselves instead of the gravity, candor, meekness, and piety, which become assemblies of the ministers of religion, were noisy, factious, and intriguing to a degree that would disgrace the lowest political cabal, and torn with infuriate contentions and rivalries.¹

many of the cities have gone out of the gates with their wives and children, and the aged even, and worshipped under the open sky, bearing with patience all the severities of the weather, and looking for relief from God. What lamentations can equal such calamities, what fountains of tears suffice for these evils!"

"But it is a still more unhappy circumstance that they who seem to be sound in the faith are divided among themselves, and difficulties invest us like those in which the Jews, when besieged by Vespasian, were embroiled, who were at once pressed by the war without, and wasted by insurrection within; for besides the contests with the heretics, another is waged among ourselves that has reduced the church to extreme weakness." *Basilii Epist.* 69, op. tom. iii. pp. 109, 110. Similar representations occur in his 61st and 70th, and several other letters. *Febronii de Statu. Eccl. Præf.*

¹ Gregory Naziansen represents himself as resolved never to attend another

While dissensions, encroachment, and tyranny were thus the characteristics of the bishops as a body during the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, the vast aggrandizement of the patriarchs of Rome in the ages that followed, and acquiescence of the nations in their claims of authority over the whole western church, armed them with a tenfold power to disquiet it, which they exercised with a proportional restlessness and energy. They took away the peace of the church by enforcing the law of celibacy on the clergy, by which thousands of families were torn asunder and consigned to ignominy and wretchedness, and myriads and millions of the unmarried harassed with perpetual temptation, or precipitated into hopeless vice. They filled the civil empire and the church with distractions, rivalries, and war, by arrogating the right of investiture to vacant bishoprics, asserting a jurisdiction over the prelates of other kingdoms, as well as the patriarchate of Rome, and assuming the power of interdicting the living at their pleasure from the rites of worship, and the dead from burial, and excommunicating princes, divesting monarchs of their authority, and absolving their subjects from allegiance. There has scarce been a pause in their contests with the cities, the states, and the princes of Italy, from the gift to them of a civil dominion by Pepin, down to the present hour. By their quarrels with the emperors of Germany, the nations both of that kingdom and of Italy were distracted by contentions, rebellions, and wars for several generations, and the factions to which they gave birth continued to disorder and harass the Italians through a succession of centuries. A war of prerogatives with the Gallican church and monarchy, excited the jealousy, inflamed the resentment, and provoked the resistance of the prelates and princes of that people, through a thousand years. Their kings were repeatedly excommunicated and dethroned, the kingdom placed under interdict, the prelates deprived of office and summoned to Rome, and the whole population harassed by threats and smitten by anathemas.

A similar war of usurpation and tyranny was waged with Spain and the British isles. Several of the monarchs of England were excommunicated and dethroned, and others threatened with those inflictions, the kingdom repeatedly placed under interdict, and

assembly of bishops, on the ground that he had never known a synod that ended happily, or that did not increase rather than diminish the evils it was designed to allay. The spirit of contentiousness and ambition with which they were animated, he exhibits as transcending description, and rendering their difficulties more hopeless of a remedy than those of any other class. Epist. 55.

the prelates and people for ages oppressed with enormous exactions. It was with the bishops or pope that all the religious dissensions that distracted that kingdom during its submission to the sway of Rome had their origin. It was the factious bishops, aspiring cardinals, and profligate and tyrannical pontiffs, who gave birth to the great schism of the papacy in the fourteenth century, and all the boundless distractions with which the church was rent during that feud.

The popes and subordinate bishops took away the peace of the church by denying all liberty of dissent and freedom of thought, and persecuting the witnesses of God, who from age to age testified against their idolatries, and rebuked their usurpations; the Paulicians, the Albigenses, the Wickliffites, the Lollards, the Waldenses, the Bohemians, prompting the civil rulers to the ravage of their fields, the conflagration of their cities, and the promiscuous slaughters by which they were nearly exterminated. Nor was this war on the peace of the church any less their characteristic after the revival of learning in the fifteenth century, and the secession of the Protestant nations from their jurisdiction. Those blows at their power only prompted them to new arts and more strenuous endeavors to maintain their usurped authority, and hold their vassals in bondage. They renewed their intrigues to control the civil governments, rekindled the fires of persecution, and redoubled their exertions to overawe the timid by the force of authority, and exterminate those who refused submission to their will by the tortures of the inquisition.

And such for a long period was the character in a large degree of the prelates of England after their secession from the communion of Rome. They arrogated a similar right to legislate over the prerogatives and laws of God, and a similar authority over the liberties and consciences of his worshippers, and acquiesced in their assumption by the civil rulers; they were animated by an equal ambition, and guilty of equal violations of the rights and peace of those under their sway. The pride, intolerance, and tyranny with which for ages they pursued and crushed the dissentients from their creed and rites; the malignity with which they sometimes attempted to debase the ministers of their own communion illustrious for learning, piety, and usefulness, and swerve them from allegiance to the Almighty; and the cruelty with which they consigned their families to disgrace and beggary, and strove to hunt them from existence, have no parallel in the history of any other Protestant nation. Large as the number is of great and good men who have held the episcopal office

in that church, vast as the myriads are who through divine grace have washed their robes under their ministry, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and gone up from the conflicts of this stormy scene to the rest of heaven, she is yet among the guiltiest of usurpers and tyrants. Her crown is sullied, her stole is purpled with the blood of multitudes of the witnesses of God whom she has wantonly slain, and thence, like her persecuting sisters, she is ere long to be struck by avenging justice from her throne.

Such are some of the various forms in which these usurpers of the rights of God have taken peace from the earth; such the vast extent to which they have filled the church and civil empire with disquiet and tumult. To delineate at large the disastrous agency which they have thus exerted, were to give a history of nearly all the religious contentions, and a principal share of the civil calamities with which the church has been afflicted for sixteen hundred years. There has not been an age in which millions have not been harassed by them with disquietudes and alarms, and subjected to innumerable sufferings. There is not a dungeon within the circuit of their jurisdiction that has not been peopled by their victims, nor an ancient city which they have not lighted with the fires of persecution, and stained with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. There is not a hamlet that has not been terrified by the threats of their remorseless vengeance, and resounded with the shrieks of the young and the aged, the beautiful and holy dragged forth by them to scourging, to torture, and to death; nor a sequestered vale that has not been wet with the tears of those whom they have overwhelmed with injuries, and driven to despair.

The representation that power was given to those whom the horseman represents, that they should kill one another, has had an equal verification in their history.

As the power of the ecclesiastic to destroy, which the sword of the civil usurper is employed to symbolize, is a power to inflict what is deemed a fatal spiritual wound, and is an official power, the killing which the symbol foreshows is on the one hand either an excommunication from the church, or a sentence to destruction, which in their judgment infallibly draw after them the ruin of the soul, and are the only species of official acts that are supposed to carry with them that influence; and on the other, an authoritative compulsion to apostasy.

They have from the commencement of their usurpations, held that union with their church, and a participation in its rites, were

essential to salvation, and claimed the power and right to admit at their will to the kingdom of heaven, by admission to the church, or exclude from it by excommunication, and sentencing to destruction. Thus Cyprian: "Whoever is separated from the church, is joined to an adulteress, and disinherited of the things promised to the church; for he cannot attain the rewards which Christ bestows, who leaves the church of Christ. He is an alien, profane, an enemy. He cannot have God as a father, who has not the church as a mother. As well might any one have escaped who was out of Noah's ark, as he may who is out of the church."¹

In like manner the fourth Lateran Council in 1215; *una vera est fidelium universalis ecclesia, extra quam nullus omnino salvatur.*² "There is one true universal church of believers, out of which no one can be saved." Boniface VIII. also: "We firmly believe and sincerely profess one holy catholic church, and that apostolic, out of which there is neither salvation, nor remission of sins."³ Cyprian, and those who followed in his train, likewise regarded the gift of the keys to Peter, and the promise to the apostles generally, that whatever they loosed or bound on earth, should be loosed and bound in heaven, as indicating their investiture with the power of giving or denying salvation by an admission to the sacraments, and a sentence of absolution on the one hand, or debarring from them, and sentencing to excommunication and destruction on the other.⁴ Thus Chrysostom: "Priests have received a power which God never chose to confer on angels, for it was never said to them, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Earthly princes have a power of binding, of bodies only however; but this bond grasps the soul, and extends to heaven, so that whatever the priests do below, God legitimates above, confirming the sentence of his servants. But what less is this, than that he has conferred on them all celestial power; for whosoever sins, he said, ye remit, they are remitted, and whosoever ye retain, they are retained. Can any authority be greater than this? All judgment was given to the Son by the Father, but here I see it all devolved by the

¹ De Unit. Eccl. c. 6.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. p. 982. Bellarmine also: *Extra ecclesiam nemo salvatur, sicut extra arcam Noe. De Eccl. lib. iii. c. 3.*

³ *Unam sanctam ecclesiam catholicam et ipsam apostolicam urgente fide credere cogimur et tenere, nosque hanc firmiter credimus et simpliciter confitemur, extra quam nec salus est, nec remissio peccatorum. Const. Extravagan. lib. i. tit. viii. c. 1.*

⁴ Cypriani de Unitate, Eccl. c. 4.

Son on them ; for they are advanced to this supremacy precisely as though they were already translated to heaven, exalted above human nature, and freed from human passion. Moreover, were a king to confer on one of his subjects authority to imprison and again release whoever he pleased, he would be admired and envied by all. But the priest receives an authority from God as much greater, as heaven is superior to earth, and souls to bodies.

“ It is madness to despise this power without which we can neither attain salvation, nor any of the blessings that are promised ; for if no one can enter into the kingdom of heaven except he be born of water and the Spirit, and he who does not eat the flesh of the Lord and drink his blood is excluded from eternal life, and none of these are possible except through the consecrated hands of the priest, how can any one without him escape the fire of hell and attain a crown ?”¹

Bellarmino also : “ We and all Catholics interpret the keys given to Peter of supreme power over the whole church.”—“ In the Scriptures he is said to bind, who enjoins and who punishes ;—for the church binds those on whom she inflicts excommunication :—but he is said to loose, who remits sins—who frees from punishment, who releases from law, from vows, oaths, and similar obligations. When therefore it was said to Peter generally, whatsoever you loose and bind, power was given him of enjoining, of punishing, of releasing, of remitting, so that he was constituted the judge and the prince of all who are of the church.”² “ The fathers expressly assert that in the promise whatsoever thou shalt loose, the power is given of remitting sins through the sacraments of baptism and penance.”³ To be debarred from the sacraments therefore was in their judgment to be debarred from salvation ; and to be excommunicated from the church and anathematized by a bishop, a pope, a synod, or a general council, to be

¹ De Sacerdotio, lib. iii. c. v.

² At nos, et Catholici omnes per claves datas Petro intelligimus summam potestatem in omnem ecclesiam.—In Scripturis ligare dicitur, qui præcipit et qui punit.—Ligat enim ecclesia eos quos punit poena excommunicationis. Solvere autem dicitur, qui remittit peccata, qui liberat à poena, qui dispensat in lege, in votis, juramentis, et similibus obligationibus. Cum ergo dicitur Petro generaliter :—*quicquid solvere*, &c., datur ei potestas præcipiendi, puniendi, dispensandi, remittendi proinde fit iudex, et princeps omnium, qui sunt in ecclesia. Bellarmini de Roman. Pont. lib. i. c. 13. See also Van Espen de Censuris Eccl. cap. i.

³ Denique patres diserte asserunt dari hic potestatem remittendi peccati, per sacramenta baptismi, et poenitentiae. Bellarmini de Roman. Pont. lib. i. c. 12. See Baronius also, Anno 34, No. 197 ; and Casaubon Exercit. in Baron. No. 127, p. 612.

devoted to perdition.¹ It has been the doctrine accordingly of the bishops in every age, that they held a spiritual sword;² and to strike with a sentence of excommunication, or an anathema, has been in their vocabulary to strike *spirituali gladio*, with the spiritual sword; *excommunicationis gladio*, with the sword of excommunication; *apostolico mucrone*, with the apostolic blade; and *pontificis gladio*, the sword of the pontiff. "The proud and con-

¹ "There is nothing the Christian should so dread as to be separated from the body of Christ; for if separated from his body he is not a member of him; and if not a member he is not quickened by the Spirit. But whoever has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his. *Nihil enim sic debet formidare Christianus quam separari a corpore Christi.*" *Augustini apud Gratiani Decret. Causa xi., q. 3, c. 33.*

Anciently excommunication, when distinguished from anathema, denoted a deprivation of the sacraments; and an anathema an ejection from the church as a heathen and publican, and sentence to destruction. After the twelfth century excommunication was distinguished into the less, which was a simple exclusion from the sacraments, and the greater, which was an ejection from the church, while an anathema was a sentence to destruction: *Anathema est æternæ mortis damnatio.* Van Espen, *de Poenis et Censuris Eccl. c. v., s. 1, 2, 3.*

In the first ages set forms of excommunication seem not to have been used. The canons and decrees of the councils of the fourth, fifth, and sixth ages, simply sentence their violators to separation from the church, and denounce on them an anathema. After the eighth century, to invest them with greater significance they were often expressed in set forms, embracing an enumeration of the curses to which their victims were devoted. Among them are the following: "By the judgment of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and of the blessed Peter, prince of the apostles and of all saints, and also by our subordinate authority and the power divinely given us of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth, we debar him and all his accomplices and favorers from the participation of the precious body and blood of Christ, and from the society of all Christians, exclude him from the threshold of holy mother church in heaven and on earth, decree him to be excommunicated and anathematized, and adjudge him condemned with the devil and his angels, and all the reprobate, to eternal fire, until he shall recover himself from the snare of the devil, return to amendment and penance, and make satisfaction to the church of God which he has injured." Van Espen, *de Censuris Eccl. c. v., s. vi., p. 108.*

"Unless they sincerely repent and make satisfaction to our mediocrity which they have injured, we confound them with an eternal malediction, we condemn them with a perpetual anathema. Let them incur the wrath of the supreme judge. Let them be aliens from the heritage of God and his elect, and neither in the present life have communion with Christians, nor obtain a part with God and his saints in that which is to come; but let them be associated with the devil and his ministers, and suffer the punishment of avenging fire with eternal sorrow. May they be hated of heaven and earth, and tortured with the inflictions of hell forever. Let them be cursed in the house, let them be cursed in the field. Let the food and fruit of their bodies be cursed. Let all be cursed which they possess, from the dog that barks at them, to the cock that crows in their hearing. Let their part be with Dathan and Abiron whom hell engulfed alive, with Ananias and Sapphira who were instantly struck dead, and with Pilate and Judas the traitor, nor let them have any other burial than that of an ass, and so let their lamp be extinguished in darkness. Amen." Van Espen, *de Cens. Eccl. c. v., s. vi., p. 108.*

² *Uterque ergo est in potestate ecclesiæ, spiritualis scilicet gladius et materialis.* *Extravagan. Comm., lib. i., tit. viii., c. i.*

tumacious are slain with the spiritual sword when they are ejected from the church."¹ "The sword of excommunication is the effective instrument of ecclesiastical discipline."² "They are branded with infamy, and cut off by the apostolic blade from the bosom of holy mother church."³ "The throats of the heresies that arose during this pontificate, were cut by the sword of the Pontiff."⁴ And those spiritual wounds could, in their judgment, be healed only by the hand which inflicted them, or some superior power intrusted by the canons with the requisite authority.

The power they thus acquired to kill one another, according to their estimate of the official import of those acts, they have exercised on a vast scale. Excommunication was the usual penalty inflicted by bishops for the violation of their canons, and the councils began at an early day to excommunicate those whom they condemned, and pronounce anathemas on those who dissented from their doctrine, or disregarded their disciplinary laws. Thus the council of Nicæa sentenced those to excommunication who held the doctrine of Arius. The Arian councils of Sirmium and Seleucia pronounced anathemas on those who dissented from their creed. The council of Antioch excommunicated those who disregarded the doctrinal definitions of Nicæa, or violated its own canons. At the council of Ephesus, Cyril and his party excommunicated John of Antioch and his associates, and John and his coadjutors retorted the sentence on Cyril and his party. The council of Constantinople under Leo excommunicated the worshippers of idols; the second council of Nicæa and the fourth Lateran those who denounced their worship as idolatry. The bishop of Rome excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople, and the patriarch of Constantinople the bishop of Rome. The pope excommunicated the prelates of Germany, the prelates of Germany excommunicated the pope; and the rival popes of the fifteenth century excommunicated each other, and were themselves excommunicated by the councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basle.

The contests of patriarchs and popes with each other were of

¹ *Spirituali gladio superbi et contumaces necantur, dum de ecclesia ejiciuntur.* Cypriani Epist. iv., c. 4.

² *Excommunicationis gladius nervus sit ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ.* Concil. Trident. Sess. xxv. de Reformatione, c. iii.

³ *Infamia sunt notati, et a sinu sanctæ matris ecclesiæ apostolico mucrone abscissi.* Fabiani Supp. Epist. i., Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 772.

⁴ *Pontificis gladio jugulate sunt.* Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 768, n. There are many other forms: *Excommunicationis se noverit mucrone percussum. Eum ecclesiasticæ animadversionis mucrone feriemus. Eum apostolico anathematis mucrone vulnerit. Anathematis se sciat mucrone percussum.*

little significance however, compared with the ceaseless blows inflicted by them on their inferior bishops, and by the bishops on their clergy and flocks. From the tenth to the sixteenth century especially, the whole episcopal army were incessantly brandishing their swords, and striking down their victims, and rendering the church by their folly and vengeance a vast scene of terror, turmoil, and misery. The frequency of excommunication during the tenth and following ages, and the frivolousness of the causes for which it was inflicted, especially after the prelates began to use their spiritual sword for the protection of their temporal as well as their ecclesiastical rights, transcends description. The evil became so enormous that decrees were enacted by the councils of Constance and Trent to restrain the abuse.¹

But beside these sentences, which were regarded as carrying spiritual death to those against whom they were directed, they made their legislative and judicial power the means of actually inflicting a fatal wound on one another, and on multitudes of their people, by betraying or forcing them to an apostasy from God that necessarily involved a spiritual death.

They have from the commencement of their usurpation imposed their legislative acts on one another, and enforced them by all the pretended authority of their office, and all the rewards and penalties with which the civil magistrate has been induced to support their discipline; and held that as they had a right to dictate to their people, so they were under obligation to submit to the decrees and enactments of their own order as of absolute authority, when imposed by the body, a general, national, or provincial council to which they were subordinate, or a patriarch or pope to whom they regarded themselves as owing allegiance; and have thus betrayed each other into apostasy from God by that assumption of legislative power over his rights and laws, and by their usurped authority have driven each other in numerous instances into the adoption of doctrines that involved a revolt from him, and transference of their homage to creatures and to idols, and thence inevitably precipitated them to everlasting ruin. Thus the Arians on their accession to power under Constantius and Valens, induced the great body of the clergy by authoritative dictation and the threat of deposition, confiscation of their property, torture and banishment, to adopt their peculiar creed, and sincerely, doubtless in many instances, on the ground on which the nationalization of the church and the legislation of councils proceeded, that bishops and princes had a right to dictate the

¹ Van Espen. de Cens. Eccl. c. vii. s. v.

faith and worship of the church. The councils of Chalcedon, the fourth Lateran, and Trent, authorized and enjoined the invocation of saints, the homage of relics, and the worship of images, enforced them on all the churches subject to their jurisdiction by an anathema, and by their authority thus became the reason to the thousands that followed in their train, of receiving those impious doctrines, and offering that idolatrous worship.

But besides this legislative authority, other efficient inducements were employed to constrain them to the reception of their creed and participation in their rites. The excommunicated were not only not allowed to unite in the worship of the church, or enter religious assemblies, but were debarred from society, deprived of civil privileges and rights, divested of their property, and rendered infamous. Thus the tenth canon falsely ascribed to the apostles—"If any one unites in prayer with an excommunicate even in a family, let him be debarred from communion;"¹ and the council of Antioch, "It is not allowable to communicate with the excommunicated, nor to assemble in private houses to pray with those who do not pray together in the church, nor to receive those in one church who do not meet together in another. Let the bishop, presbyter, or deacon who is found communicating with the excommunicated, be himself excommunicated for disregarding the canons of the church."² They were not allowed to give evidence against a bishop, whatever were his official crimes either against them or others. Thus the council of Constantinople: "It is not lawful for heretics to accuse orthodox bishops in respect to ecclesiastical affairs; and by heretics we mean those who have first been ejected from the church and afterwards anathematized, and those also who, though professing the true faith, have yet separated and been cut off, and formed an assembly adverse to our canonical bishops."³ They were denied the rights of property and citizenship, and placed out of the protection of law. Thus pope Gregory X. sentenced Guido de Montfort: "Although such temerity transcends the severest punishment, yet that it may not go wholly unrequited, and its impunity excite to further attempts, we have determined as far as our official power allows to visit him with merited acerbity. Therefore having deliberated with our brethren and giving sentence by their counsel, we pronounce the aforesaid Guido de Montfort a

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 33.

² Labbei Concil. tom. ii. c. 2, p. 1309. Also Concil. Carth. can. vii. Labbei, tom. iii. p. 694.

³ Labbei Concil. tom. iii. p. 561.

convicted perpetrator of that flagitious crime"—assassination—"condemn him as such to the loss of his rank, and sentence him to be branded with perpetual infamy. Let him be so wholly detestable that he can neither make a will, nor receive property either by will, or from an intestate, or by succession to any one. Nor let him be allowed to give testimony. His goods also wherever situated, we sentence to confiscation by those within whose jurisdiction they are, without prejudice to any one's right. We forbid to Guido himself all jurisdiction, care and power over the lands also and other property of his wife, strictly enjoining that no obedience be rendered to him in respect to them or any other lands whatsoever, and bind any one who may obey him, with the sentence of excommunication; and the land which obeys him we subject to an ecclesiastical interdict, so that no sacrament can be administered to any one in it, except baptism to infants, penance, and the eucharist to the dying. We deprive him wholly of all that he holds from churches of whatever kind, or has in trust in any other manner, so that it may revert without obstruction to the churches to which it pertains. And that the punishment of his crime to be inflicted and to abide on his posterity, also may be made known to all in future times, we by the same authority decree that neither Guido nor his descendants to the fourth generation, unless they shall become entitled to the favor of this seat, shall be eligible to any dignity. No access to any dignity shall be opened to them, or any one of them, nor any audience be granted to them, or others in their behalf in order to their soliciting it. No one of them shall ever be advanced to any ecclesiastical or worldly honor, or any public office whatever, ecclesiastical benefice, or promotion in the monasteries. Moreover we divest the aforesaid Guido of all protection short of the peril of death and mutilation, and put him under interdict, so that excepting that danger, his person may be freely seized by any one. We moreover strictly command all prefects of provinces whatever may be the title they bear, and all magistrates, consuls, and commanders of cities, camps and other places, to seize him and conduct him to our court to be committed to prison, or punished in such other manner as we may approve. We bind him also as sacrilegious and contumacious with the sentence of excommunication, and decree that all places which he enters, unless seized and detained in them in order to be conducted to us, be placed as long as he remains in them, under an ecclesiastical interdict. We moreover by this interdict prohibit all and every city, community, and corporation whatever, and all persons

of whatever rank or condition though even of imperial, regal, or any other dignity, from receiving him, or as far as in their power allowing him to be received. Let no one have any transaction or commerce with him, unless such as concerns the salvation of his soul. Let no one yield him any aid, or counsel, or favor, open or secret. Let no one enter into any association or confederation with him under any pretext, color or machination whatever; and all persons whatever who presume to do otherwise, shall incur by that act the sentence of excommunication, which we now pronounce on them,—and the society that shall do otherwise and their lands who shall enter into a confederation with him, we place under an ecclesiastical interdict.

“And finally, we wish all the aforementioned sentences of excommunication to be so inflexibly observed, that we divest all our penitentiaries, confessors, and all others of all power of absolving from them, or relaxing them, except at the moment of death.”¹

This sentence to excommunication, disfranchisement, and infamy, though prompted in the instance of Guido by an atrocious crime, exemplifies the penalties with which they were accustomed to pursue all who refused submission to their sway.

The ecclesiastical sword, when so tempered as to give birth to every stroke to this tremendous array of consequences, became an instrument of persuasion and compulsion which no human power, unless armed by the grace of the Almighty, was adequate to resist, and crushed every order of the hierarchies themselves, and the whole church and empire into unquestioning and abject acquiescence in whatever doctrines and rites it was employed to enforce. To such an extent was this carried, that an acknowledgment of the usurped powers of bishops, patriarchs, popes, and councils became the great test of orthodoxy and piety, and the reception or rejection of their doctrines and rites continued of importance less because of their own nature, than of the acknowledgment or denial which they involved of that authority. Bishops were required on their induction into office to profess the false dogmas and adopt the idolatrous rites of the church, ratify all the arrogations of the pope, and promise implicit obedience to his will; and so absolute was the triumph of the artifice over the general reason and conscience, so blind and unquestioning was the credence of all orders in its legitimacy, that for many centuries scarce a monarch, a prince, or a prelate who was struck by an anathema, failed to procure by submission, bribes, or force, a reconciliation with the papal see. It was extorted by the sword,

¹ Bullarii Mag., tom. viii. pp. 81, 82.

purchased by gifts, or gained by concessions and humiliations, by the emperors of Germany, the kings of France, England, Spain, and Sicily, and a long train of princes, prelates, barons, statesmen, and speculatists. It was thus by this dread engine that the several orders of ecclesiastics were made to unite in the superstitions, idolatries, and blasphemies of the Greek and Papal systems, and the whole body of the church struck with spiritual death. It was the instrument by which they were forced to all the great steps of their apostasy, the worship of images, the homage of relics, the invocation of saints, the idolatry of the mass, the exaltation of the pope. It was the power by which opposition was arrested, dissidence silenced, and every incumbent of the sacred office compelled into concurrence and approval. Had there been no legislation in the Greek and Latin churches in the eighth century, the worship of images would not have gained a universal prevalence. Had the powerful party which opposed it been allowed freedom of discussion, and liberty to follow the teaching of the Scriptures, they would have preserved the knowledge and belief of the truth, and perpetuated a succession of true worshippers. Had the opponents of transubstantiation in the tenth and eleventh centuries been allowed to assail error without obstruction, they would have triumphed over the ignorance, absurdity, and blasphemy of that doctrine, and been followed in integrity and wisdom by a vast train of disciples to the present day; and were perfect freedom of discussion now permitted in the Catholic and Greek communions, and the Scriptures alone made the standard of faith, a vast crowd whose lips are now sealed, and whose reason and conscience are smothered by a blind trust in the prerogatives of councils and popes, or a dread of anathemas, would speedily emerge from the abyss of error and folly in which they are immersed, and discern, embrace, and advocate the truth in its purity and dignity.

And finally, on the acquisition of this tremendous power, the representation that a great sword was given to the horseman, was verified.

The bishop originally had authority only over his own diocese, and could discipline and excommunicate none but those of his own church. By their association, however, in synods, they acquired authority over each other, and on their organization under metropolitans and patriarchs, they invested those great prelates with the power of assembling synods, and issuing and enforcing authoritative sentences; and finally, on the elevation of the pope to supremacy, he acquired the power of dictating whatever doc-

trines and enjoining whatever worship he pleased, and of enforcing his will by all the penalties which the most remorseless malice could invent, or the most lawless tyranny inflict, and exerted his authority at his will, not only on individuals, whether monarchs, princes, prelates, or unofficial, but often struck at once with his gigantic sword whole classes, whole hierarchies, and whole nations.

Such are the verifications of the symbol which the history of the church presents; such the resistless demonstration that the prelates to whom I have applied it, are the persons whom it represents. There is no other order of men in the church to whom it is in any degree applicable. No class of its ministers except bishops, for a long series of ages arrogated the power of legislation over its faith and worship. No order except diocesans have by their official power taken peace from the earth, and agitated, torn, and devoured alike the church and civil empire with animosities, discords, and wars; and they are the only class in the churches under episcopal government that have ever had authority to depose from the sacred office, strike with excommunications and anathemas, and compel one another thereby to the reception of doctrines and adoption of rites that necessarily carried death to the soul.

The expositions that have been given of this seal are very various. Mr. Brightman interprets it of the wars of the Roman empire with exterior nations; Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Cocceius, Eichhorn, and Rosenmuller of the contests of the Jews with the people with whom they were intermixed in Judea and elsewhere, or with the Roman armies during the reign of Nero and Vespasian; Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Juricu, Mr. Lowman, Mr. Whiston, Bishop Newton, and others, of the revolts of the Jews under Hadrian; Mr. Elliott of the revolutions and slaughters by the prætorian guards during the second and third centuries; Vitringa of the persecutions of Christians by Decius, Valerian, and Diocletian; and Mr. Faber of the Medo-Persian empire. These incongruous and contradictory interpretations are all founded on the assumption that the symbol and the agents symbolized are of the same species, and carry on their front therefore the most indisputable proof of their error. Dean Woodhouse, who regards the symbol as representing contests within the church, interprets it also literally of slaughters and wars, and violates therefore in like manner the law of analogy.

SECTION X.

CHAPTER VI. 5-6.

THE THIRD SEAL.

AND when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, Come. And I looked, and lo, a black horse, and he that sat on him having a balance in his hand, and I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures say, A chœnix of wheat for a denarius, and three chœnices of barley for a denarius, and the oil and the wine thou mayest not injure.

This symbol also is taken from political life in the Roman empire, and is a ruler who reduces his subjects to want and misery by taxation; as is denoted first by the balance, the symbol of a civil magistrate, as a bow or a sword is of a warrior; next, by the wheat and the barley, the oil and the wine, which indicate that he exercises authority over those articles. Thirdly, by the price, which implies that he determines the rates at which they are to be valued, if coin be received in their place, or the price at which the produce of land is to be taken to render the sum in coin at which it is to be assessed, proportional to its productiveness; and the rates also at which it is to be sold when distributed to the citizens from the public granaries at a price. Fourthly, by the prohibition to injure the oil and the wine, which denotes that the exactions are so oppressive that the husbandman prunes the fig-tree and vine to such a degree as to prevent their bearing, in order to exempt them from assessments. And finally, by the color of the horse, which is indicative of affliction.

The voice from the living creatures is to be regarded as descriptive of the agency he is to exert, and the laws he is to impose, not prophetic of restraints to which he is himself to be subjected. A denarius it would seem from Matthew xx. 2, was the usual price at that period in Judea of a day's labor in agriculture. A chœnix of wheat was in Greece the usual allowance for a day's sustenance.¹ Thence that rate of wheat, though the capacity of the chœnix is uncertain, may be considered as denoting a difficulty to the poor of supplying their personal wants, and much more the wants of families and dependants. Greater exactness in weight and measure is observed by those who create high

¹ Herodoti lib. vii. 187.

prices ; and high rates of food, as they almost universally involve a corresponding depreciation of other rates, and of labor as well as commodities, render it difficult to the poor to gain adequate means of subsistence. That scarcity is the effect of the horseman's agency, is seen moreover by the exhibition of death under the fourth seal, as employing the agents of the second and third, under the denomination of the sword and famine.

That such is the horseman, and such the agency he is to exert, is confirmed moreover by the incongruities which embarrass other constructions. Thus to regard him, as he has been exhibited by many interpreters, as famine itself, not one who causes famine, is to make him the mere symbol of a symbol ; for if the horseman with his accompaniments as a symbol is famine, he is indisputably such not literally, but only by representation. A rider on a black horse holding a balance and determining the rates of grain, is not identically the same as famine. The one is a living intelligent agent acting in a particular sphere, and exerting a peculiar agency ; the other a certain relation between eaters and the supply of food. But to treat the representative agent in that manner as not the real symbol, but the mere personification of the symbol, is wholly unauthorized, and overthrows all certainty of interpretation. As well might it be assumed that the words which the apostle employed in describing the horseman and his agency, are not the real words which embody their description, but only representatives of another and wholly different set to which that office is assigned. The horseman is himself therefore with his accompaniments the symbol ; is like those which preceded him an agent, and exerts an agency in conformity first with his office, denoted by the balance and the determination of the prices of grain ; and next, with the mode in which he administers that office, indicated by the color of the horse, the high rates of grain, and the prohibition to injure the oil and the wine.

All these were characteristics and peculiarities of the Roman emperors, especially of the third and fourth centuries. They imposed the various taxes for the support of the court, the army, the civil service and the cities, and determined the species in which they were to be levied, and the modes of their collection.¹

¹ " All magistrates shall, when a census is made, designate with their own hand the species of produce and other things which are rated in the indiction, and express the quantities." *Manu propria Judices universi periculo suo annonarias species et cætera quæ indictione penduntur, definitis quantitibus, et comprehensis modis, facta adscriptione, designent.*—*Codicis Theod. lib. xi. Tit. i. l. 3.* See also l. 6, 15, 18, 20, 28.

A large portion of the contributions exacted from the subject were the products of the soil, grain, oil, wine, wood.¹ The lands were assessed in proportion to the nature of their products and their fruitfulness.² The subject in some cases, instead of delivering the kinds that were levied, which he might be obliged to purchase or convey to an inconvenient distance, was allowed to give their equivalent at rates fixed by the exactor in coin.³ At other periods the receivers were prohibited from such exchanges, and required to exact the articles designated in the indictions.⁴ The exactions were so excessive as to induce the cultivators in some cases to mutilate their fruit trees and vines to such a degree as to render them unproductive, at least for the year of assessment, in order to escape the tax on their products. "If any one shall sacrilegiously cut a vine, or stint the fruit of prolific boughs, and craftily feign poverty in order to avoid a fair assessment, he shall immediately on detection suffer death, and his property be confiscated."⁵ If, as is probable from the period of the indictions,⁶ the measurement of the lands and estimate of their produce was made but once in fifteen years, that space presented a strong motive to such an expedient. The prohibition denotes the extreme to which assessments were carried. All fruitful trees and vines were numbered, an estimate made of their annual products, and a contribution levied proportional to that estimate.⁷ It indicates likewise the severity with which the impositions were exacted.

Of the produce thus drawn from Italy and the provinces, a large portion was destined for the great cities, especially Rome, and

¹ Codicis Theod. lib. xi. tit. i. l. 6, 15. Dion. Cassii Hist. Rom. lib. lxxvii. c. 9, 10.

² Codicis Theod. lib. xiii. tit. xi. l. 2, 3.

³ Codicis Theod. lib. xi. tit. i. l. 6.

⁴ "Let no one hereafter exact gold of the city of Rome, instead of the species which are levied." *Nemini anrum pro speciebus urbis Romæ liceat exigere de futuro.*—Codicis Theod. lib. xi. tit. i. l. 8. "That no one may presume that money is to be substituted for produce, let it be made known that no receipt will be given to those who captiously violate the law on this subject." *Ne quis pro speciebus annuariis pecunias existimet inferendas, scientibus cunctis, quod si quis contra hanc Serenitatis Nostræ legem captiosum aliquid putaverit perpetrandum, Securitatibus hoc modo editis eos esse carituros.*—Lib. xi. tit. iii. l. 5. Also, tit. ii. l. 4.

⁵ *Si quis sacrilega vitem falce succideret, aut feracium ramorum fetus hebetaverit, quò declinet fidem censuum, et mentiatur callidè paupertatis ingenium, mox detectus capitale subibit exitium, et bona ejus in fisci jura migrabunt. Illo videlicet vitante calumniam, qui fortiter detegitur laborasse, pro copia ac reparandis agrorum fetibus, non sterilitatem aut inopiam procurasse*—taking care, however, not to confound that pruning which is designed to promote fruitfulness, with that which is intended to cause sterility.—Codicis Theod. lib. xiii. tit. xi. l. 1.

⁶ Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. xvii.

⁷ *Agri glebatim metiebantur, vites et arbores numerabantur, animalia omnis generis scribebantur, hominum capita notabantur.*—Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 23.

in the fourth century Constantinople ; and though designed as a provision against scarcity,¹ was occasionally at least so administered as to give birth to that evil. The gratuitous distribution was sometimes suddenly diminished or discontinued, and private dealers and the prefect of the public magazines enabled, by the great multiplication of purchasers, to exact higher prices. Thus Augustus on one occasion reduced the recipients from an almost innumerable multitude, to two hundred thousand ;² and Nero suspended the donation altogether.³ The quantity to be distributed to individuals⁴ and the rates at which sales were made from the public granaries, were fixed by the prefect ;⁵ and the latter sometimes wantonly advanced for the purpose of causing distress and discontent. Dionysius Papirius, the prefect under Commodus, raised the rates in a time of famine, in order to inflame the people against Cleander the chamberlain and prefect of the army and a monopolist.⁶

These exactions were so enormous, and often so lawless and wanton, as to reduce great numbers from riches and competence to poverty. Caracalla is represented as animated by a furious passion to wrest their possessions from every class of citizens, and reduce them to ruin. He frequently seized the produce of their farms, and the provisions collected for their families, or compelled them to purchase grain, wine, and other articles, at great expense, and without remuneration, and gave them to his troops, or sold them to raise money. He often exacted large donatives from ordinary citizens as well as from the rich. He renewed all the impositions that had been remitted by his predecessors, advanced the most oppressive, the tax on inheritances, from a twentieth to a tenth, and by extending the gift of citizenship to all provincials, subjected the whole population to the peculiar burdens annexed to that privilege. When about to return

¹ Dio. Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. liv. c. 1, lib. lv. c. 31. Taciti Annal. lib. i. c. 7, lib. xv. c. 39. Codicis Theod. lib. xiv. tit. xv. xvi.

² Dio. Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. lv. c. 10.

³ Dio. Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. lxii. c. 18.

⁴ Dio. Cass. H. Rom. lib. lv. c. 26.

⁵ That the people of Rome may not be served with bad bread, let the measurers and bargemen be compelled to sell to the bakers at low prices only two hundred thousand measures of pure and sound grain. No pessinus panis Populi Romani usibus ministretur sola ducentena millia modiorum frumenti, integri adque intemerati, juxta priscum morem, mensores et candicarii levioribus pretiis pistoribus venundare cogantur.—Codicis Theod. lib. xiv. tit. xv. l. 1. The other grain required by the bakers being furnished gratuitously from the public magazines, they had no motive to adulterate their bread from an advance of price in the market.

⁶ Dio. Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. lxxii. c. 13.

from the camp, or from distant cities to the capital, he compelled the citizens to waste vast sums in the erection of numerous structures along the line of his progress for his repose, and amphitheatres and circuses wherever he wintered, or proposed to winter, which were left to dilapidation, and seemed designed for little else than to wear out his subjects.¹

The enormity and violence of these exactions sprung in a degree from the rapid succession of tyrants, each one of whom was compelled to purchase the support of the army by large donatives, and to satiate the avarice of a vast train of subordinates ;² and continued through a series of years, wasted the wealth of the capital and the provinces, and intercepted and discouraged agriculture to such a degree, as at length to give birth in the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus to a severe scarcity, and at a later period to depopulation through wide regions.³

The horseman of this seal, then, as well as his predecessors, is a Roman emperor or usurper, and is Caracalla doubtless, who commenced a system of excessive taxation, and was followed by a long train of similar oppressors. Under the second seal those tyrants were exhibited in their relations to each other as competitors for the throne, conspiring to acquire, or endeavoring to retain it, taking peace from the earth, and slaughtering each other in the contest. In this they are exhibited in their relations to the people as oppressors, employing their vast powers to wrench from those whom it was their business to protect and foster, their possessions and means of subsistence, and reduce them to poverty and famine.

The symbol being thus drawn from civil life, to what other department of society are we to look for a class and succession of official persons exerting an analogous agency? Not certainly to the idolatrous or philosophic world. The priests and speculatists of those classes never subjected their followers to a famine of their doctrines ; nor had they, could it have been regarded as a calamity, or entitled to an introduction into the prophecy. It is to the church, the only resembling society, indisputably therefore that the actors denoted by the symbol belong.

¹ Dio Cass. Hist. Rom. lib. lxxvii. c. 9, 10.

² In the seventy-two years from Septimius Severus to Diocletian, twenty-six held the sceptre. The number of unsuccessful aspirants, many of whom, followed by armies, wasted the fields, exacted contributions from the cities, and preyed on the helpless population in all the usual forms of tyranny, was far greater.

³ *Deserentur agri, et culturæ verterentur in silvam.* The fields were deserted, and scenes of cultivation turned into forest. Lactantii, de Mort. Persecut. c. 7. Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. x.

What agency, then, of the ministers of that spiritual kingdom can this misrule of emperors and usurpers appropriately represent? What is it in those whose office it is to feed the flock of God, to subject it to a famine, analogous to that to which the population of the empire was reduced by tyrannous and wanton exaction? To withdraw from them the supports of spiritual life; that knowledge of God, of themselves as needing redemption, and of the method of salvation, to which they were entitled, and which are requisite to a vigorous piety;—to obstruct them in its cultivation, and render their endeavors after sanctification fruitless. And this perversion of their office was the most conspicuous characteristic of the agency of the ministers of the church, from the close of the second century to the second quarter of the fourth.

I. They discontinued, in a large degree, during that space, to preach the great truths of the gospel in their simplicity. There is no clear and emphatic exposition in any of the writers whose works have come down to us, from Clemens Alexandrinus to Athanasius, of the rights of God on which his government is founded, of the sanctity of his law, of the alienation and guilt of men, and need of such a redemption as is revealed in the gospel, of Christ's death as a vindication of the rights of God and an expiation for sin, of the nature and necessity of faith in him, of regeneration by the Spirit through the apprehension of the truths of the gospel, or of justification by faith in the Redeemer. They neither preached Jesus Christ and him crucified by simply proclaiming his death on behalf of men, and the proffer of pardon to those who accepted him by trust in his blood, and calling on men to repent and believe, without entering into any formal exposition of the great principles on which the work of Christ proceeds; nor did they preach him by unfolding and enforcing those principles. They thus, in a most emphatic sense, withheld from their people the bread of life; reducing those who had already become the children of God to a famine of knowledge; and leaving others, and the young especially, without any thorough initiation into those great truths, an acquaintance with which is essential to a just sense of sin, a perception of the necessity of a gratuitous salvation, and a reception of Christ as a sacrifice and justifier. In their discussions, with idolaters especially, the peculiarities of the work of Christ were studiously kept out of sight, the Scriptures were neglected, and Christianity exhibited as little else than a system of morals.¹ Of

¹ Clemens Alexandrinus represents himself as intentionally concealing the great

the extent to which the disregard and depreciation of the word of God prevailed, the works of Minutius Felix, Arnobius, and Lactantius, may be taken as examples. One would scarcely suspect, from a large part of the first six books of the Institutes of Lactantius, that the church had an authentic revelation from God, in which all the great truths of his government, of our condition, of the method of salvation, and of the retributions that are to follow this life, are made known, and claim a reception from all. He intentionally, indeed, neglected the Scriptures, and relied for the conversion of the world on the testimony of men, the pretended prophecies of the sibyls, and the doctrines of philosophy.¹

II. Besides this studied neglect of the Scriptures, the mystic and allegorical methods of interpretation introduced by Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen, contributed much to divert the attention of the church from their great truths, and obstruct the knowledge of them. Men were taught to disregard and set aside their natural and obvious meanings, and search for such as were distant, fanciful, and often absurd. All histories were converted into fables and parables; all laws, doctrines, and promises, into types; and the whole volume of revelation thus made a chaos of shadows, from which imagination was allowed to shape whatever forms it pleased.²

elements of the truth in his *Stromata*, from the apprehension that to teach them openly, would be to expose them to abuse and contradiction by unprincipled opponents. *Strom.* lib. i. p. 279.

¹ *Instit.* lib. v. c. 4.

² Clemens Alexandrinus held that besides the literal import, a mystical meaning lies couched under the language of the Scriptures, which is to be elicited only by interpretation, and wished his readers to regard his *Stromata* as written in that manner with a double sense. "Mysteries are taught mystically, so that the language in which they are expressed may denote them, and yet not so much to the ear as to the understanding." *Strom.* lib. i. p. 275.

Origen represented the Scriptures as involving a threefold sense, and regarded the most obvious as not only the least in value, but often deceptive and dangerous, and the occasion of all the errors into which interpreters had fallen. "A threefold explication should be given of the meaning of the sacred word, that he who is most simple may be edified by its flesh or its obvious sense, he who has made some progress by its soul, but he who is perfect, like those of whom the apostle speaks, by the wisdom of God, or its spirit; for as man consists of body, soul, and spirit, so the Scriptures, in order that they may minister to the salvation of men, are constituted with a triple meaning." *De Princip.* lib. iv. c. 9.

He held that there are mysteries veiled beneath the narratives of the Old Testament, which the most acute are unable fully to unfold. "That there are some mystical dispensations indicated in the Scriptures, all, even the most simple, who receive them believe; but what they are, the intelligent and modest acknowledge they do not know. Should any one, for example, inquire in regard to Lot and his daughters, Abraham's two wives, the two sisters whom Jacob married, or his two

III. The Scriptures were further depreciated and set aside by the fabrication and countenance of gospels and other supposititious works in the name of the apostles and their cotemporaries, marked by extreme meanness of conception, abounding with gross errors, and adapted to lead to low and false apprehensions of the government of God, the work of redemption, and the nature of piety.¹

IV. The attempts of Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and others, to accommodate the facts and truths of revelation to the doctrines of philosophy, led not only to a formal neglect of them, but still more to exhibitions which misrepresented their nature. They were often treated as substantially the same, their dogmas as alike authoritative, and salvation as attainable by the one as well as the other.² The attempt moreover to incorporate them,

maids, no other answer can be given than that they are mysteries that are incomprehensible by us." *De Princip. lib. iv. c. 11.*

He proceeds to exemplify his theory of a secondary and a spiritual meaning, and represents that God chose to veil the knowledge which he reveals of himself and his administration, under visible symbols, such as the creation of the world and of man, the obedience of the righteous and the sins of the wicked, that none but the studious and wise may comprehend them; that deep mysteries lie enveloped in the Old Testament in the histories of the wars of the Israelites and others, in which the vanquished and victors are commemorated; and finally, that the written law is rather a mere prophecy than an expression of the truth itself, and is to be divested of the integuments in which it is wrapped, in order to a full discovery of its meaning. *De Princip. lib. iv. c. 14.*

¹ Irenæus represents the multitude of books that were forged and circulated to excite the wonder of the unlettered as innumerable. *Contra Hæreses, lib. i. c. 17.* Eusebius also speaks of them as numerous, unapostolic in style, and absurd and impious in their sentiments. *Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 25.* That they yet had a vast influence, and on the church, is apparent from the complaints of Irenæus and other fathers, and the fact that several of them, as the false gospels and acts, the Sibylline Verses, the Recognitions of Clemens, the Apostolical Canons and Constitutions, and the letters ascribed to Ignatius, were regarded as of authority, and quoted by men of learning and eminence for many ages. See Jones on the Canon. *Casaub. Exercit. in App. Baron, no. x. p. 65. Moshemii Dissert. de Causis Suppos. Librorum.*

² Clemens Alexandrinus devoted a large part of the first and sixth books of his *Stromata*, to the commendation of the Greek philosophy; representing a knowledge of it as not only useful, but almost indispensable to an understanding of the gospel, and exhibiting it as a revelation from God as well as the Scriptures, and a law and rule of justification to the Gentiles, as the Old Testament was to the Israelites. "We cannot err in saying that all things that are necessary and useful to life come from God, and especially that the philosophy given to the Greeks as a peculiar covenant, is the foundation of that of Christ."—*Stromat. lib. vi. p. 648.* "The law to the Jews, but philosophy to the Greeks until the advent of Christ, when all were called into the church by the teaching of faith."—*Strom. lib. vi. p. 650.* "Before the advent of Christ, philosophy was necessary to the Greeks in order to justification, and still subserves the piety of those who found their faith on demonstration; for it led the Gentiles to Christ as the law did the Hebrews, and prepared the way for that which is perfected under him."—*Stromat. lib. i. p.*

led to the discussion of numerous questions that have little connection with theoretical or practical religion, and drew the attention of the church from realities to shadows ; from the wisdom of God to the folly of men.

V. Not only were vain and dangerous speculations thus obtruded into theology, but conceptions were formed also of the sacraments of the gospel, that were false and pernicious. Such were the views that were entertained of baptism.

It was held as early as the age of Justin Martyr that remission of sins was conferred in baptism on those who were already regenerated: "We will also state how having been renewed through Christ, we consecrate ourselves to God. They who are persuaded of the truth of what we teach and relate, receive it with faith, and promise as far as they are able, to live accordingly, are taught fasting to ask of God forgiveness of their former sins, and we unite with them in those acts. Then they are led by us where there is water, and begotten again with the new generation with which we were ourselves rebegotten; for this washing with water is done in the name of God the Father of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit; for Christ said, Except ye be begotten again, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."¹ By the new generation by water he means, not the renovation of the mind which is the work of the Spirit, but simply the introduction of one already renewed into the church by baptism, entrance on a new life as a subject of Christ, and attainment thereby of the forgiveness of all former sins. "The name of the Father of all is pronounced over him who desires to be rebegotten and repents of his sins, in order to his obtaining remission of his former offences."² "And this washing is called illumination, inasmuch as they are enlightened who have learned these things."³ It was regarded as a symbol or expression of the knowledge and faith which they professed.

282. Origen, the disciple of Clemens, adopted this theory, and followed it in his speculations, treating the doctrines of the Greek philosophy as a key to the histories and doctrines of the Scriptures, and employing them to solve the mysteries of the divine administration. He introduced accordingly into his theology a great number of false, absurd, and impious conjectures and dogmas, which obscured, adulterated, or set aside the truth, and formed emphatically another gospel; and he was followed by a vast crowd of disciples and imitators for several ages. See Moshemii *de rebus Christ. ante Constant.*, sec. iii. pp. 604-629. Dupin, *Biblioth. Nova*, tom. i. pp. 190-224. Thus within a little more than a century of the death of the last apostle, did the ministers of the church begin to neglect and depreciate the Scriptures, and adopt that wisdom by which the world knew not God, as a more efficacious instrument of leading them to salvation.

¹ *Justini Mart. Apolog. i. c. 61*, pp. 256-258.

² *Ibid. c. 61*, p. 258.

³ *Ibid. c. 61*, p. 260.

“After we have thus washed him who has believed and assented to our faith, we conduct him to the assembly of the brethren, and together offer fervent prayer for ourselves and him who has been enlightened and all others wherever they are, that having learned the truth we may have the blessedness to be found in our works, good citizens, and observers of the commandments, so that we may obtain eternal salvation.”¹

Clemens Alexandrinus held that illuminating and sanctifying influences of the Spirit were conferred in the baptism of the believer, as well as remission of sins. “Immediately therefore after having been rebegotten, we obtain that perfection after which we earnestly endeavor. For we are illuminated, that is, with the knowledge of God.”² “Being baptized we are enlightened; being enlightened we are adopted as sons; being adopted we are perfected; and being perfected we are made immortal. He says, ‘I said ye are gods, and all the sons of the Most High.’ This work is variously denominated grace, illumination, perfection, and the bath; the bath by which sins are washed away, grace by which the penalties of sin are removed, illumination by which we obtain the holy and saving light—that is, by which we see clearly that which is divine; and finally it is denominated perfection, inasmuch as it has nothing wanting, for what does he lack who knows God?”³ It is in this relation accordingly doubtless, as attended with enlightening and sanctifying influences, that it is spoken of in the fable of John and the robber as a perfect protection against sin.⁴

Tertullian also represents the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, as well as the remission of sins, as conferred in baptism. He exhibits the water as imbued with a miraculous power by the descent of the Spirit into it at its consecration, in virtue of which, in its application in the rite, it exerted a purifying influence on the soul, like that of water on the body. “Once we enter the bath, once sins are washed away, so that it is not necessary to repeat the rite.”⁵ “All waters acquire by the invocation of God the sacramental virtue of sanctification; for the Spirit immediately descends from heaven, rests on them, and sanctifies them by itself, and being thus sanctified by union with the Spirit, they acquire the power of sanctification. . . . For as the waters of Bethesda were imbued with a medicinal virtue by the

¹ Justini Mart. Apol. i., c. 65, p. 266.

² Pædagog. lib. 1. c. 6, p. 92.

³ Pædagog. lib. i. c. 6, p. 93.

⁴ Clem. Alexand. lib. quis dives, c. 42.

⁵ Semel ergo lavacrum inimus, semel delicta diluuntur, quia ea iterari non oportet.—De baptismo, c. 15.

intervention of the angel, so the Spirit is diffused through the waters of baptism, and the person to whom they are applied, is spiritually purified by them."¹ That he did not regard it as regeneration, but as a rite by which those who had already believed were to be admitted to the church, and made partakers of gifts which were bestowed on those only who made a profession of their faith, is indicated by the caution which he teaches should be used in its administration.²

Origen likewise regarded the remission of sins and the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, as given in baptism to those who were prepared by repentance to receive it, but not to others. "Come, ye catechumen, repent that ye may obtain baptism to the remission of sins. He receives baptism to the remission of sins, who ceases to sin. But if any one comes to the baptistery sinning, he does not obtain remission. Come not to baptism therefore I pray you without wariness, and a diligent scrutiny, but first exhibit the fruits that become repentance."³ "All are not laved unto salvation. Prepare yourselves while catechumen that ye may come to the baptistery and be washed to salvation; and not like those who are washed, but not to salvation; receiving the water, but not the Spirit. He who is laved to salvation, receives not only the water but the Holy Spirit."⁴

But by a large part of the bishops of that and the following age, it was not only held that sanctifying influences and the remission of sins were conferred in baptism whenever rightly administered and received, but the still more erroneous and dangerous doctrine that it is a spiritually regenerating rite, and its mere reception thence made an absolute ground of reliance for

¹ *Igitur omnes aquæ de pristina originis prærogativa sacramentum sanctificationis consequuntur invocato deo. Supervenit enim statim spiritus de cœlis et aquis superest, sanctificans eas de semetipso, et ita sanctificatæ vim sanctificandi combibunt. . . . Igitur medicatis quodammodo aquis per angeli interventum, et spiritus in aquis corporaliter diluitur, et caro in eisdem spiritaliter mundatur.—De baptismo, c. 4.*

² It was not rashly to be conferred on whoever desired to receive it. The reason that the Eunuch was immediately baptized by Philip was, that he gave evidence of a true faith, and Paul was not baptized until it had been revealed that he was a chosen vessel. Discretion was therefore to be used in its administration, and it was judicious to delay it according to the condition, disposition, and age of each person, and especially the young. *Ceterum baptismum non temere credendum esse sciunt, quorum officium est.—Itaque pro cuiusque personæ conditione ac dispositione, etiam ætate cunctatio baptismi utilior est, præcipue tamen circa parvulos.—De baptismo, c. 18.*

³ *Venite catechumeni, agite pœnitentiam, ut in remissionem peccatorum baptismum consequamini. In remissionem peccatorum ille accipit baptismum qui peccare desistit. Si quis enim peccans ad lavacrum venit, ei non fit remissio peccatorum Homil. xxi. in Lucam. tom. iii. p. 957.*

⁴ *Homil. vi. in Ezek. tom. iii. p. 378.*

salvation. Thus Cyprian, "Inasmuch as the second birth in which we are born unto Christ through the bath of regeneration is spiritual, it were incongruous to say that any one may be spiritually born among heretics, with whom it is acknowledged the Spirit is not. For water alone cannot cleanse away sin and sanctify the man, unless it have the Holy Spirit. It must of necessity therefore be conceded that the Spirit is there, where it is asserted that baptism is, or else that there is no baptism where the Holy Spirit is not; inasmuch as baptism is not possible without the Holy Spirit. But what is it to assert and contend that they may be sons of God, who are not born in the church? For baptism is that by which the old man dies and the new is born, manifestly from the apostle's declaration, 'he saves us through the bath of regeneration.' But if regeneration is by the bath, that is by baptism, how is it possible that a sect that is not the spouse of Christ, can bear sons to God through Christ? For it is the church alone that is united to Christ that can spiritually bear sons, as the same apostle teaches in the saying, Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, purifying it in the bath of water."¹

The same views were held also by Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea Cappadocia: "Let us not forget that according to the Song of songs, the church is a garden enclosed, a sealed fountain, a paradise of apples. But how can they who have never entered that garden, nor seen the paradise planted by the Creator, give any one from the fountain which is enclosed in it and sealed with God's seal the living water of saving baptism? Moreover, as Noah's ark which saved those only who were within it, all who were without being destroyed, was a mere symbol of the church of Christ, we are taught thereby to inculcate the unity of the church, as Peter also indicates in saying, 'in like manner baptism saves us'—showing thereby as they who were not with Noah in the ark, not only were not purified and saved by the water, but instantly perished in the deluge, so also now whoever are not in the church with Christ, will perish without, unless they are turned to the sole and saving bath of the church through penitence."²

He ascribes the same view also to Stephen, the bishop of

¹ *Baptisma enim esse, in quo homo vetus moritur, et novus nascitur, manifestat et probat beatus apostolus dicens; Servavit nos per lavacrum regenerationis. Si autem in lavacro, id est in baptismo est regeneratio, quomodo generari filios deo hæresis per Christum potest, quæ Christi sponsa non est. Ecclesia est enim sola, quæ Christo conjuncta et adunata spiritaliter filios generat.—Epist. 74, c. 5, 6.*

² *Cypriani Epist. 75, c. 15.*

Rome. "Stephen, who boasts that he has succeeded to the chair of Peter, is not animated by any zeal against the heretics, but concedes to them not only a moderate but the greatest powers of grace, saying and asseverating that they by the sacrament of baptism wash away the pollution of the old man, remit all former deadly sins, make sons of God by a celestial birth, and renew them unto eternal life by the sanctification of the divine bath. After ascribing these great and celestial prerogatives of the church to heretics, what else can he do than to communicate with those to whom he attributes such grace?"¹

The rite being thus exalted from its original design as a profession of faith in Christ and initiation into the church, into a regenerative office by which the subject was created a spiritual child of God, endowed with sanctifying influences and full forgiveness; its reception was treated as involving all that was for the time requisite to salvation; a mere sacramental religion substituted in the place of repentance, faith, love, adoration, and the other affections which are required by the gospel; and the church thus taught to seek the blessings of life in a false direction; to look to the minister of the church instead of the Spirit of God for the grace of renovation; to submit to baptism instead of repenting, believing, loving, adoring, and obeying; and in place of the fruits of the Spirit, to regard the mere reception of that rite as a proof of piety and preparation for heaven, and made so absolutely to rely on it, that it became customary to postpone it till the last hour, in order to secure by it as far as possible a full remission of sins.²

This doctrine soon gaining a general prevalence, and becoming invested with a factitious importance by the contests respecting the rebaptism of heretics, and its adaptation to exalt the power of the bishops,³ it drew a larger share of attention for a long period than any other, was more zealously inculcated, and was

¹ Cypriani Epist. 75, c. 17.

² Constantine was not baptized till his last illness. Euseb. de Vita, lib. iv. c. 61, 62. Nor Constantius till about to engage, a few days before his death, in a war with Julian. Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 57.

³ This doctrine was a principal ground on which the bishops commenced and raised the towering structure of their power over the church. To convince the flock that to be baptized by a minister of the true church was to be renewed and constituted an heir of heaven, that that was the only method of regeneration and pardon, that bishops alone had power to confer that baptism, or commission others to confer it, and that it could be administered to none but those who placed themselves under their jurisdiction and yielded implicit subjection to their teachings and commands, was to lay the foundation for the most superstitious and abject dependence on the one hand, and the most lawless and merciless tyranny on the other. It was through

thence made a most efficient means of blighting the church with a spiritual famine.

VI. In like manner the eucharist began at this period to be regarded as fraught with a saving virtue, its reception deemed an adequate preparation for death, and a presumptuous trust placed in it that naturally led to a neglect of repentance, faith, and love, and reconciled a life of irreligion, debasement, and exacerbated rebellion, with a confident expectation of forgiveness and salvation. Thus Cyprian recommended the gift of the eucharist to fortify the church against the danger of defection, and strengthen it to meet death if necessary for the sake of Christ. "But now peace is necessary not to the weak but the strong, and fellowship is to be granted by us not to the dying but to the living, that we may not leave those unarmed and naked whom we excite and urge to the battle, but fortify them with the protection of the blood and body of Christ; and as the eucharist is instituted that it may be a defence to the receivers, let us arm those whom we wish to be secured against the adversary with the shield of the Lord's feast; for how can we teach and excite them to pour out their blood in the confession of Christ's name, if we deny them his blood when about to engage in that conflict? or how can we make them adequate to the cup of martyrdom, if we do not first by the right of fellowship admit them to drink the cup of the Lord in the church?" "He cannot be equal to martyrdom who is not armed by the church for the battle. The mind faints which is not strengthened and inflamed by the reception of the eucharist."¹

In like manner, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, who flourished at the same period, represents the eucharist as given at the moment of death to one who had sacrificed, and as constituting by the reconciliation with the church and remission of sins which it involved, a preparation for heaven.²

this rite accordingly that the doctrines of a priestly power to regenerate men, forgive sins, and confer salvation, of the impossibility of salvation except through the offices of the priests, and of the transmission from the apostles of their powers and prerogatives to their successors, were first broached.

¹ At vero nunc non infirmis, sed fortibus pax necessaria est, nec morientibus sed viventibus communicatio a nobis danda est; ut quos excitamus et hortamur ad prælium, non inermes et nudos relinquamus, sed protectione sanguinis et corporis Christi muniamus, et cum ad hoc fiat eucharistia, ut possit accipientibus esse tutela, quos tutos esse contra adversarium volumus, munimento dominicæ saturitatis armemus. . . . Idoneus esse non potest ad martyrium, qui ab ecclesia non armatur ad prælium, et mens deficit, quam non recepta eucharistia eriget et accendit. Epist. 57, c. 2, 3.

² Serapion, an old man who had no other fault than that he had sacrificed during the persecution, being about to die, desired a child who was in attendance to call a presbyter to fit him for his departure. The presbyter being ill, and having been directed by Dionysius to show favor to the dying who sought it, that they might pass

This misconception of its efficacy was soon carried so far, that it was given to infants,¹ administered in all cases at the approach of death to those under penance, though they became insensible or delirious,² and was sometimes even placed in the lips of the dead.³ Union with the church and the reception of the consecrated bread and wine, were thus again, like baptism, substituted in the place of repentance and faith as the conditions of acceptance with God, and made the ground of a deceptive reliance.

VII. Another fatal step in their downward progress was the adoption of the Platonic ideas of the grounds and nature of sin, and the modes and means of sanctification; and the introduction thereby into the church of a false code of virtue, and the substitution of dispositions and acts that involve no excellence, for the fear and love of God, the faith in Christ, and the social affections and agencies which are enjoined by the gospel. Assuming that the grounds of our sinning lie in our corporeal nature, and thence that the indulgence of the appetites and passions that have their foundation in it, is necessarily evil, or at least incompatible with the higher degrees of piety; they inferred that virtue must, so far as they are concerned, lie, not in their subordination to law, but in their absolute denial and extinction. Hence these disciples of Plato introduced into the church the monstrous doctrines and discipline of fasting, celibacy, and asceticism, with which it became infatuated and debased in the third and following centuries,⁴ as the great and almost the only means of sanctification, and the loftiest modes of piety.⁵ Instead of being instructed to restrain their appetites, and yield to them only in those relations in which God allows or enjoins their indulgence, his people were taught to regard every impulse of hunger, thirst, or desire, however involuntary or irresistible, as degrading and sin-

from life with a good hope, gave the boy a fragment of the eucharist, and directed him to dip it in water and let the drops fall into the dying man's mouth. The child followed the directions, and the old man immediately on imbibing the drops expiring, it was deemed by Dionysius that he was preserved till that was accomplished, in order that he might be released from excommunication, and his sins being blotted out, be acknowledged for the good deeds he had before done. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 44.

¹ Van Espen, de Eucharist. c. ii. s. 2.

² Concil. Carthag. c. 76. Labbei Concil. tom. iii. p. 957.

³ Several councils in the fourth and fifth centuries prohibited its administration to the dead. "The eucharist should not be given to the bodies of the dead, for it is written, take ye, eat, but the bodies of the dead can neither take nor eat." Concil. Carthag. Labbei Concil. tom. iii. pp. 719, 880.

⁴ Near a fourth of the works of Tertullian is devoted to these topics; and celibacy was approved and encouraged by Cyprian and Origen.

⁵ Mosheimii de rebus Christ. sec. ii. pp. 310-312, sec. iii. pp. 658-690.

ful, and to be opposed and suppressed by a stern and merciless violence. Marriage, the first social institution of the Almighty, and the most propitious to all the forms both of virtue towards men and piety towards God, was denounced and calumniated as merely sensual, sinful, and fit only for the debasement of demons and brutes.¹ Thence thousands and myriads were induced to withdraw from the spheres which God assigns for the obedience he requires, to refuse and disown wholly all the domestic and social virtues, and to retreat to lofty mountains and solitudes remote from their fellow-men, and spend their days in the idleness, the ignorance, and debasement of savages, struggling by starvation, perpetual vigils,² self-torture, and endeavors to suppress

¹ The celibates of the age of Tertullian and Cyprian continued to live in society and engage in the usual pursuits of life. The first ascetic who withdrew into solitude was Paul of Thebais, who about the year 260 retired to a cave at the foot of a mountain, and there continued sixty years, unvisited by any one except in a single instance by Antony. Hieron. Vita Pauli. Antony soon imitated his example in Lower Egypt, spent near seventy years in solitude, and much of it in a sepulchre on the borders of the desert, and drawing a vast crowd to adopt the ascetic life, united them in associations or monasteries. Athanasii de Vita Anton. op. tom. ii. pp. 456, 457. Sozomen says of him: He repressed his corporeal appetites by voluntary inflictions, and the passions of his mind by a lofty resolution. His only food was bread with salt, his drink water, his dinner hour sunset. He often continued two days, and sometimes more, without eating. He watched usually till dawn, employing himself in prayer. If he grew drowsy, he lay down for a few moments on his mat. Often, however, the bare ground was his bed. He declined the use of oil, the bath, and things of that nature, as rendering the body effeminate. It is said he never beheld himself undressed. He had no knowledge of letters, nor did he esteem them. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 13.

² Of the exploits of the ascetics, their imagined conflicts with demons and victories over them, were regarded as a signal proof of the excellence of their discipline, and its offensiveness to the powers of darkness. Athanasius relates that the devil, inflamed with envy and hatred of virtue at the sight of Antony's self-denial, assailed him with all the arts of temptation of which he was master, at one time approaching him in the form of a woman, and endeavoring to excite his passions; at another attempting to terrify him by assuming the shape of a black boy, and announcing himself as the great enemy of virtue; and on his enclosing himself in the sepulchre, attacking him with a multitude of demons, and scourging him till he swooned. The solution of these contests, which were common phenomena of the ascetic life, doubtless is, that the exhaustion consequent on extreme fasting induced that derangement of the nervous system not infrequent in sickness, by which all objects of thought present themselves in sensible forms of the utmost vividness; such as represent intelligent agents and material objects seeming to be beheld by the eye, the voices which they are conceived to utter to be heard by the ear, and their imagined touch to produce the impression of a real one. Persons in that state are often perfectly conscious that it is an illusion. It is the commencing process, however, of delirium, and when that consciousness is lost and the spectres of the brain are taken for realities, becomes insanity, and in its highest forms, the wildest madness. So debased had the views of religion entertained by the greatest genius of the age become, that the illusions of disease were thus regarded as the sublimest flights of virtue, and the hopeless shipwreck of body and mind a victory over the embattled hosts of hell. Athanasii Vita Anton. tom. ii. pp. 454, 458.

thought and consciousness itself, to annihilate their appetites, and elevate themselves to the passionless calm of incorporeal beings; a process in which they generally became extremely debased, sunk often to premature decrepitude, and not unfrequently into madness and idiocy.¹ The annals of ignorance, folly, degradation, fanaticism, and crime, present few pictures more alien from the purity, the dignity, the wisdom of religion, or more dishonorable to our nature than the records drawn by their admirers of the solitary and associated ascetics of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries.

By this false theory of the nature and remedy of sin, the victims of this miserable delusion were thus thwarted in all their endeavors after sanctification. Like the millions of the empire whose efforts to supply their wants by the culture of their fields were defeated by the seizure of their crops, or taxation that exhausted all their means, they were starved by those who should have fed them with the bread of life, and perished by the discipline on which they relied for salvation.

VIII. The errors that were held in regard to the influence of demons, were fraught with a similar tendency. It was imagined that the excitement of the appetites and passions was the work of malignant spirits, and their expulsion therefore necessary in order to exemption from temptation.² Exorcism was accordingly regarded as an important step in the process of sanctification, and relied on as a means of preparation for heaven.

¹ Evagrius says of those of the age of Arcadius: "Some of them enclose themselves in houses so small that they can neither stand erect nor lie down at length. Others associate with beasts, and pour out prayer to God in the obscure caves of the earth. But they devised another mode of discipline that seems to transcend the utmost powers of endurance; for men and women go into the desert, wearing only what clothing decency requires, and expose the rest of the body naked to the extremes of cold and heat, regardless alike of each. They also reject all food that is appropriate to man, and graze the earth, whence they are called foragers, and provide only enough to support life, so that in time they resemble beasts, becoming changed in their appearance, and so averse to men that they flee at their approach, and if pursued conceal themselves by a rapid flight, or retreat into some inaccessible place. I will mention another characteristic still more worthy of consideration. There are some among them, though few, who after having reached through virtue an insusceptibility of passion, return to the world, and by feigning to be insane, trample down vain-glory, which Plato says is the last coat of which the soul divests itself. They learn to eat so wholly without sensibility, that if it were necessary even with innkeepers or hucksters, they would feel no delicacy in respect to the place, the company, or any thing else. They enter baths that are frequented, associate much with women, and lave with them. They become so superior to passion as to triumph over nature, so that neither the sight, the touch, nor the embrace itself of a woman excites any natural sensation." Evagrii Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 21.

² Athanasii Vita Anton., tom. ii., p. 456. Mosheim, Hist. Ch., cent. iii., p. ii., c. 4, s. 4.

“The Scriptures, and the ancient and uniform practice of the church in baptism, clearly show that infants are freed from the sway of the devil when they are exorcised, and promise through those who bear them to renounce him.”¹

IX. On similar false principles a system of external discipline of dishonor and deprivation, was employed to correct and restore those penitent members of the church, who had either fallen into great sins, or even violated the most unreasonable canons.² Instead of higher instruction, and more authoritative and affectionate appeals, they were debarred from the renewal of their vows and the celebration of the death of Christ, excluded from the station of communicants, driven to the vestibule or area of the house of worship,³ and systematically deprived, often for a long series of years, of the very aids that were most needed to convince them of their sins, recall them to penitence, and confirm them in faith and love.⁴ Those of the excommunicated, though for the most trivial and unjustifiable causes, who did not seek a reconciliation with the church and submit to the prescribed penance, were rendered infamous, and debarred the rights of citizenship and of humanity.

X. A course of reserve and concealment was systematically pursued with the young. Instruction in the higher truths of Christianity, especially those indicated by the sacraments, was deliberately withheld from all candidates for baptism and confirmation.⁵

¹ *Circumstipantur enim et divinarum auctoritate lectionum, et antiquitus tradito et retento firmo ecclesie ritu in baptisate parvulorum ubi apertissime demonstrantur infantes, et cum exorcizantur et cum ei se per eos, a quibus gestantur, renuntiare respondent, a diaboli dominatione liberari. Augt. Epist. 194, c. 43. See also Concil. Carthag. c. 7. Labbei Concil. tom. iii. p. 952.*

² Mosheim, *Hist. Church*, cent. iii., part ii., c. iv., s. 1.

³ “The place of weeping, where the offender should stand and ask the prayers of believers as they enter, is without the door of the oratory. The place of hearing, within the door in the porch, where the sinner should stand as long as the catechumen, and go out then, for having heard the Scriptures and the discourse, let them be excluded as unfit to be present at the prayer. The place of prostration is such, that he who is stationed within the gate of the temple may go out with the catechumen. The place of the assembly such, that he who belongs to it may stand with the believing, and not go out with the catechumen. And finally, there is the place of participating the sacraments.” *Gregorii Thaum.*, c. xi.; *Labbei Concil. tom. i.*, p. 1030.

⁴ *Pulsent sane fores, sed non utique confringant. Adeant ad limen ecclesie, sed non utique transiliant. Cypriani Epist. xxx., c. 7.* By the council of Eliberis, those who left the Catholic church and joined a sect were, if they returned, debarred from communion and subjected to penance ten years; other offenders seven years, five, and shorter periods; and such as were guilty of sacrificing, manslaughter, and anticidie, were forever debarred from readmission. *Labbei Concil.*, tom. ii., pp. 5-9.

⁵ Origen compared the gradual initiation of the catechumen to the progress of the

Thus they whose office it was to teach the gospel, by neglecting and suppressing the truth, by substituting philosophy in its place, and by inculcating false views of the nature and means of sanctification, verified in a terrible manner the prophecy, and reduced the church to a destitution of the means of spiritual life, analogous to the dearth of bread produced by oppressive exactions in the empire.

Expositors have universally, so far as I am aware, formed a different judgment of this symbol; most of them regarding the horseman as an emblem of famine itself, occasioned by ordinary causes, not one who induces a scarcity by wrongfully usurping the means of subsistence, and obstructing and discouraging their culture. Thus Grotius and Rosenmuller interpret the symbol of the general famine in the reign of Claudius, predicted by Agabus, Acts xi. 28; Dr. Hammond of one foreshown in Matthew xxiv. 7, which he referred to Judea anterior to the siege of Jerusalem; Mr. Brightman and Mr. Dabuz, of a scarcity in the time of Septimius Severus; and Mr. Lowman of a dearth during the reign of the Antonines. But that, in whatever relation it is contemplated, is untenable. If the horseman be regarded as a personification of famine, or famine as a symbol, and in that character foreshowing a literal famine, as he can only be such by representation, he is treated as the symbol of a symbol, which is inadmissible. If he be regarded as merely symbolizing a famine, then he is made the symbol of a mere relation, which is against the law of analogy. The construction of Mr. Mede, Mr. Whiston, Mr. Jurieu, and Bishop Newton, who exhibit the symbol as foreshowing a period

Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. "When having left the darkness of idolatry you desire to approach and hear the divine law, you leave Egypt. When you are enrolled among the catechumen, and begin to conform to the ecclesiastical rules, you advance to the Red Sea, and gain a station in the desert, where you hear the voice of God and daily behold the glorified countenance of Moses. But if you approach the mystical fount of baptism, and standing with the Levitical order are initiated into the venerated and august sacraments, *which they know to whom the knowledge is lawful*, then having passed Jordan by the ministry of the priests you enter the land of promise, where Joshua succeeding to Moses receives you and becomes your leader during the remainder of the journey." Homil. iv. in lib. Jesu Nave, c. i., p. 405.

Athanasius says, "It is becoming, as it is written, to conceal the beautiful mystery of the King. And the Lord commands, 'cast not holy things to the dogs nor pearls before swine,' for it is not lawful to celebrate the mysteries before the uninitiated, lest the idolatrous who are ignorant should laugh, or the catechumen hurried on too rapidly should be scandalized." Apol. ad Imp., tom. i., p. 731. See also Concil. Laod. can. xix.; Labbei Concil., tom. ii., p. 567; Casauboni Exercit. xvi. in Baron., p. 478; Pagi Crit. in Baron. anno 118.

of just and severe government in the Roman empire, and refer it to the reign of Septimius Severus, is open to the same objection. If the horseman as a symbol be regarded as justice, he can only be such by representation, which is absurd. If he be regarded as merely symbolizing the exercise of justice, he is then made the symbol of a mere action or quality, which, as no resemblance whatever subsists between them, is incompatible with analogy. Moreover, if the horseman and his accompaniments be a mere symbol of justice, not of an agent exercising justice, how does it appear but that its whole office as a symbol is fulfilled in that representation? On what ground can it be assumed that the justice thus represented, is itself likewise a symbol, and foreshows something else? If, on the other hand, such a secondary symbolization be allowed, what clue is there to its nature? What does justice symbolize? What proof is there that that which it foreshows may not likewise be a mere representation of some subsequent agent, event, or characteristic? Where is the succession to terminate? How is the interpreter to ascertain when he has reached the agent or event which it is the final design of the vision to symbolize?

Cocceius exhibits the rider as a symbol of avaricious and aspiring bishops prostituting their office to worldly ends, and the voice from the living creatures as the voice of the church demanding from them the service they are bound to yield, and prohibiting them from obstructing the truth. But to make the living creatures symbols of the church on earth, is to make the throne and him who sat on it symbols also of a throne and monarch in the church on earth, and thence to exhibit the worship offered him as idolatry, which is impossible. Mr. Elliott regards the horseman as a Roman procurator, intrusted with the collection of revenue and produce from the provinces, and the voice from the midst of the living creatures, as denoting the laws of that office prohibiting injustice, and assigning the values of property, and interprets the symbol of oppressive taxation under Caracalla and his successors. But that is founded on the assumption that the representative agent and agency are of the same species as the agent and action symbolized, and is in violation therefore of analogy.

Vitringa regarded the horseman and his accompaniments as an emblem of a slight scarcity of corn exciting the apprehension of a greater, and a public decree in regard to its price; but alleged as its fulfilment the dissensions and contests of the church on the one hand exciting the fear of spiritual famine, and the

remedial and preventive doctrinal decrees of the councils respecting them on the other. But what relation is there between a slight famine of corn and a superabundance of dissensions and ecclesiastical canons, except it be of dissimilarity ; or on what ground can an emblem of one effect be regarded as symbolizing the cause and remedies of another effect ;—a scarcity of provisions the cause and the cure of a spiritual famine, than which no two things are more devoid of resemblance ?

Dean Woodhouse regards the color of the horse as denoting darkness, the balance, or yoke, as he renders it, as an emblem of slavery, the price of wheat and barley as symbolizing a scarcity, and interprets them of the extreme ignorance, the burdensome rites, and the gross superstitions on the one hand, and the dearth of practical religion on the other, which marked especially the middle, and in a large degree, several of the earlier ages. But that is obnoxious likewise to insuperable objections. He founds his reference of the symbol to those events, not on the ground of analogy, but on the assumption that all the prophecies of the Apocalypse are to be taken as relating to the church, except when on his views of the rules of construction, the symbols or language render that application impossible ; which is to interpret them not by the laws of symbolization, but by a mistaken conjecture. He overlooks the consideration that the horseman is the representative agent, his accompaniments merely significant of his office and agency, and that the law of symbolization requires that he should be interpreted as representing a resembling order of agents that give birth to an analogous class of events ; and instead, exhibits the whole symbol as denoting effects merely, not agents producing them ; and the several parts of the symbol as denoting different species of effects, as ignorance, bondage, and a dearth, which is equally against analogy.

SECTION XI.

CHAPTER VI. 7-8.

THE FOURTH SEAL.

AND when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, Come. And I looked, and lo, a pale horse, and he who sat on him, his name was Death ; and the grave follow-

ed with him. And power was given to him over a fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

The agencies of the preceding horsemen were employed chiefly in varying the condition of the living. The office of this is to kill, not merely to lessen the enjoyments of life, or lay a foundation for its destruction, and his name is for that reason Death. This character is indicated also by the cadaverous color of the horse and by his attendant the grave, which hades undoubtedly denotes. It were indeed more terrible to conceive of it as a yawning passage to the realms of the lost, following death's footsteps, and disclosing to the spectators the myriad spirits of those killed by him descending to that world, but analogy forbids it. Of what world is hades the symbol, if it be taken as the invisible dwelling of the lost?

No delineation is given of the figure of the horseman. He was doubtless, however, a human form, as it is said not that he was death itself, but that his name was death,—a destroyer. The pestilence is his peculiar instrument of destruction; to kill by death in contradistinction from the sword, being to kill by a natural disease, instead of violence. He uses other weapons also, power being given him over a fourth part of the earth to kill with the sword, and with famine, and by the wild beasts of the earth, as well as with death. Of these instruments, the first is that of the armed competitors for the throne of the second seal, who take peace from the earth and kill one another; the second that of the oppressors of the third seal, who by excessive exactions reduce their subjects to poverty and famine. Death, the third, is a pestilential element breathed from his own lips into the atmosphere tainting the vitals of whoever inhales it. These he himself directly wields. The fourth are agents who act at his bidding, the dragon exhibited in subsequent visions as standing before the woman, and the wild beasts emerging from the sea and the earth and exercising a tyrannical sway over their respective territories.

This symbol is taken also doubtless like the former from the empire, and at a period when there were several acknowledged emperors or Cæsars who contended with each other for larger or exclusive authority, who reduced their subjects to famine by oppression, whose reigns were marked by pestilences, and who destroyed their subjects also by wild beasts. And such a period was the reign of Diocletian and his immediate successors. He

introduced a division of the imperial power by elevating Maximian Herculus to the rank of Augustus, and Maximian Galerius and Constantius Chlorus to that of Cæsar, and assigning to each a separate territory ;—a distribution of power sometimes to more, sometimes to fewer hands, that with few interruptions continued to the fall of the western empire. But some of those thus exalted to authority, soon became jealous of their associates or dissatisfied with a limited rule, and conspiring against one another, took peace from the earth by rivalries and mutual slaughters. Thus Diocletian himself and Maximian Herculus, were induced or compelled by the ambition of Galerius, to abdicate and exalt him and his associate Cæsar to the station of Augusti ;¹ and a succession of plots and civil wars for the empire followed for near twenty years. Maxentius the son of Maximian Herculus usurping the purple at Rome, and Maximian himself resuming it without the consent of Galerius, they conspired against Severus, who on the abdication of Maximian had succeeded him in the command of Italy, and inducing his soldiers to desert him, compelled him to surrender himself to their hands, and put him to death.² Galerius himself was thwarted in an attempt to reconquer Italy, and forced to retreat in disgrace. Maximian soon after conspiring against Constantine, who had succeeded his father Constantius Chlorus in the command of the west, met an ignominious death. His son Maxentius perished in a civil war which immediately succeeded between him and Constantine. Maximin, the Cæsar of the east, usurped the rank of Augustus against the wishes of Galerius, and on the death of the latter, made war on Licinius who succeeded that emperor, and was defeated and soon perished ;³ and finally Licinius himself met a similar overthrow in a contest with Constantine and suffered a violent death.⁴

The period was thus marked by the usurpations, rivalries and bloodshed of the horseman of the second seal.

It was not less distinguished by the enormous and violent exactions of the third. The institution of four separate civil establishments instead of one, and great augmentation of the military forces consequent on their jealousies and civil wars, naturally led to a heavier taxation ; but to those necessary burdens were added the demands of an insatiable avarice and boundless prodigality. Lactantius represents the increase of the civil and military establishments as rendering the number who were to be

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 18.

² Ibid. c. 26. Zosimi Hist. lib. ii. c. 10.

³ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 37-50.

⁴ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 8.

supported at the public expense, greater even than the contributors, and the resources of the farmers as so exhausted by the enormity of the exactions required for their support, that fields were deserted, and scenes of cultivation left to overgrow with wood. The impositions enforced by threats, violence and confiscation, at length gave birth to a severe scarcity, which was still further aggravated by Diocletian's attempting to prescribe the rates of sale.¹

To these impositions, other demands equally ruinous were added of materials, utensils, artisans and laborers, for the erection of palaces, amphitheatres, and other edifices at his new capital Nicomedia; and a favorite method of grasping means for that purpose, was the execution of the wealthy on false accusations in order to the confiscation of their property.²

Maximian Herculus was not less rapacious, less merciless, nor less bloody, but it was reserved to Galerius to carry extortion and violence to their utmost extreme. His accession to supreme power inflamed him with a passion to vex and torture his subjects. "Swarms of exactors sent into the provinces and cities filled them with agitation and terror, as though a conquering enemy were leading them into captivity. The fields were separately measured, the trees and vines, the flocks and herds numbered, and an enumeration made of the men. In the cities the cultivated and rude were united as of the same rank. The streets were crowded with groups of families, every one being required to appear with his children and slaves. Tortures and lashes resounded on every side. Sons were gibbeted in the presence of their parents, and the most confidential servants harassed that they might make disclosures against their masters, and wives that they might testify unfavorably to their husbands. If there were a total destitution of property, they were still tortured to make acknowledgments against themselves, and when overcome by pain, inscribed for what they did not possess. Neither age nor ill health was admitted as an excuse for not appearing. The sick and weak were borne to the place of inscription, a reckoning made of the age of each, and years added to the young and deducted from the old, in order to subject them to a higher taxation than the law imposed. The whole scene was filled with wailing and sadness. At length money was paid for each individual, and a ransom given for life. Yet no faith was put in these tax gatherers, but others and others again after them, were sent to renew the search for more property, and the assessment always raised,

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 7.

² Lactantii de Mort. P. c. 7.

though nothing new were found, that they might have the satisfaction of seeming not to have been sent in vain. In the mean time individuals died, and the herds and the flocks were diminished, yet tribute was none the less required to be paid for the dead, so that it was no longer allowed either to live or to die without a tax. Mendicants alone escaped from whom nothing could be wrenched, and whom misfortune and misery had made incapable of further oppression. These the impious wretch affecting to pity, that they might not suffer want, ordered to be assembled, borne off in vessels, and plunged into the sea. Such was the benignant method in which he undertook to provide that no one should be miserable under his reign. That no one might escape the census under the pretence of mendicity, he thus put to death a great multitude of the miserable."¹ Similar exactions, violences and barbarities marked the reign of Maximin in the east, and gave birth in a like manner to a famine,² of Maxentius also at Rome, and of Licinius in Illyria and Asia.³

The period was signalized also by deadly pestilences, which not improbably sprung in some degree from the scarcity and misery produced by the tyranny of the rulers. Eusebius relates that while Maximin himself and his army suffered severely in the war with the Armenians, the people at large who inhabited the cities under his rule, were harassed both by famine and pestilence. "A measure of wheat of six bushels was sold for two thousand and five hundred Attic drachms. Multitudes died in the cities, but still greater numbers residing in the country and in villages, the rustics formerly very numerous being almost exterminated either by a want of sustenance, or a pestilential disease. Some were glad to sell their most precious things to the rich for a morsel of food, others having parted with their possessions little by little, were driven to such extreme want as to eat noxious vegetables and straw, by which they destroyed their health and perished. Women of rank were forced to beg in the markets. Some so withered that they seemed like ghosts staggering to and fro and

¹ *Agri glebatim metiebantur, vites et arbores numerabantur, animalia omnis generis scribebantur, hominum capita notabantur, in civitatibus urbanæ ac rusticæ plebes adunatæ, foras omnia gregibus familiarum referta, unusquisque cum liberis, cum servis aderant, tormenta ac verbera personabant, filii adversus parentes suspendebantur, fidelissimi quique servi contra dominos vexabantur, uxores adversus maritos. Si omnia defecerant, ipsi contra se torquebantur, et cum dolor vicerat, adscribebantur quæ non habebantur.*—Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 23.

² Eusebii de Martyr Palæst. c. iv. Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 8.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 8 : lib. x. c. 8.

unable to support themselves, fell in the public ways and expired. Dead bodies cast into the market places and streets, stripped and lacerated by dogs, presented for many days a horrid spectacle. The pest thus devoured whole households and families, and especially of those who having an abundance of food were protected from hunger: so that the most opulent magistrates of the provinces and persons of rank, as though the famine had designedly reserved them for the pestilence, perished by deaths of the most acute and rapid form. Two and sometimes three dead bodies were carried together out of the same house."¹ The same pestilence raged also in the west.²

And finally these tyrants destroyed their subjects by wild beasts. Not only were the Christians during the persecutions thrown to panthers, bears, boars, and bulls in the amphitheatres for the amusement of the people,³ but it was the common sport of Galerius to feast the numerous wild beasts which he kept in his train on his living subjects. "The cruelties which he had learned in the persecution of the Christians he exercised towards all. None of his punishments were light. Not the islands, not the prisons, not the mines, but fire, the cross, and wild beasts were the chosen and daily instruments of his barbarity."⁴ "He had bears resembling himself in size and ferocity which he collected through the whole period of his reign, and as often as he wished to amuse himself, he ordered some of them to be brought, and men to be thrown to them, not so much to be chewed as to be swallowed. As he beheld their limbs torn asunder, he was accustomed to laugh with delight. He never supped without human blood."⁵

All the characteristics of the symbol were thus found in the emperors during the reign of Diocletian, and his associates and successors, and it is from that terrible combination of destroyers, doubtless, that it is taken.

This horseman, like those who preceded him, is the representative of a class and succession of agents, manifestly from the nature and variety of the instruments he employs, and the extent

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 8.

² Cypriani lib. ad Demetrianum, c. 2, 5.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 7.

⁴ Quæ igitur in Christianis exeruciandis didicerat, consuetudine ipsa in omnes exercebat. Nulla pœna penes eum levis, non insulæ, non carceres, non metalla, sed ignis crux fere in illo erant quotidiana et facilia.—Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 22.

⁵ Habebat ursos ferociæ ac magnitudinis suæ simillimos, quos toto imperii sui tempore elegerat. Quotiens delectari libuerat, horum aliquem adferri nominatim jubebat. His homines non plane comedendi, sed obsorbendi objectabantur; quorum artus, cum dissiparentur, ridebat suavissime; nec unquam sine humano cruore cœnabat.—Lact. de Mort. Persecut. c. 21.

of his ravages. The scene of his agency is like theirs, the religious world also, not the philosophic; and the Christian, not the pagan, as is seen from his use of the instruments of the second and third horsemen, and from the consideration that neither any new agents, like those which he denotes, have appeared in the pagan world, nor was the system of idolatry capable of any such deterioration as his agency represents. A moral pestilence itself, no new infusion was requisite to render it the instrument of death to its votaries. The Christian church is the only community that presents the requisite analogies to the civil empire.

Who then are they in the church of that and subsequent ages that answer to the symbol, breathing from their lips a pestilence on the souls, like that which the horseman breathed on the bodies of men; and using the instruments also of the second and third seals, and the power symbolized in the prophecy by wild beasts as the instruments of destruction? As the antithesis of the body is the soul, and of a pest that destroys the body, a false religion that destroys the soul, they must be an order that teaches an apostate religion. As to kill by the sword in contradistinction from famine and disease, is to kill by violence; and to cause spiritual death in an analogous manner, is to cause it by violence, and therefore by the spiritual sword, or the mere power of office, they must be an order of supreme authority in the church who by their official power impel men to apostatize from God. And, finally, as the wild beasts are employed in the prophecy to symbolize the civil rulers of the empire who persecute and slaughter the people of God, they must be an order that uses the civil rulers as instruments in compelling them to apostatize.

All these peculiarities meet in the metropolitans, archbishops, and other superior prelates of the fourth and subsequent ages, and especially in the patriarchs of the Greek and the popes of the Latin church. Those orders of bishops rose into existence, acquired their peculiar powers, or at least first obtained a recognition and confirmation of them from the church and the civil government, at that period. Neither patriarchs, metropolitans, nor archbishops, were known till the reign of Constantine, under whom an ecclesiastical hierarchy was erected after the model of the civil government of the empire, he being the head of the one as well as the other. The bishops of each province who had before been equal in office and rank, were placed in subordination to the bishops of the metropolis of the province, and the metropolitan bishops to a patriarch or archbishop of the capital

of the diocese in which their provinces were situated.¹ The precedence which the bishops of the chief cities, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, had before obtained chiefly from the rank of those cities themselves, and partly by concession from their equals in official authority and by usurpation, was then converted by the council of Nicæa and the emperor into a legal right.² Metropolitans were invested with authority over the bishops of their provinces, their concurrence was necessary in order to their ordination, they had power to suspend, depose, and excommunicate them, assemble them in council, preside in their deliberations, and superintend and enforce the execution of their decrees, which were made by the civil government as well as the council obligatory on the clergy and churches in their jurisdiction.³ The patriarchs had the right of ordaining all metropolitans within their jurisdiction, of assembling the bishops under them in council, presiding in their deliberations, and executing their canons.⁴ They soon, however, encroached on the prerogatives of the metropolitans,

¹ That there was no bishop of bishops in the age of Cyprian, is seen from his address to the council of Carthage. "Let us each state the views we entertain on the subject of rebaptism, neither condemning any one, nor divesting him of the right of fellowship should he differ from us in opinion, for no one of us constitutes himself a bishop of bishops, or forces his colleagues by the terror of a tyrant to follow his will, but each has the utmost freedom of decision, and is neither liable to a sentence by another, nor able to subject another to his judgment." *Neque enim quisquam nostrum episcopum se esse episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore ad obsequendi necessitatem collegas suos adigit.* Concil. Carthag. Labbei, tom. i. p. 951.

² The supreme authority conferred on the patriarchs was expressly founded on the rank of their cities. "The bishop of Constantinople takes rank next after the bishop of Rome, because Constantinople is the new Rome." Concil. Constantinop. c. iii. Labbei, tom. iii. p. 559. *Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 8.*

It was decreed by the council of Nicæa that the customs which had long prevailed in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, should be constituted law, so that the bishop of Alexandria should have authority over them all, like the authority which was customary with the bishop of Rome. Their rank was also to be continued to the churches at Antioch, and in the other eparchies. *Can. vi. Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 670.*

In like manner the false letters ascribed by Isidore to Anacletus and Stephen, represent the hierarchies as modelled after the civil government. "No metropolitans or other bishops should be called primates, except those who hold the first seats, and whose cities the ancients regarded as primates. The rest who have obtained other metropolitan cities should not be called primates, but either archbishops or metropolitans. For the cities and places over which primates ought to preside were not constituted in modern times, but long anterior to the advent of Christ, to whose chief magistrates the heathen carried up their great causes by appeal, and it was in those cities after the advent of Christ that the apostles and their successors placed patriarchs and primates, to whom the important affairs of the bishops and great causes are to be referred." *Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 891, can. vi. p. 612, can. iv.*

³ Concil. Nicæni can. iv. v. *Dupin. de Ant. Eccl. Discip. Dissert. i. c. 11, 12.*

⁴ *Dupin. de Ant. Eccl. Discip. Dissert. i. c. 11, 12.*

assuming often the ordination of the bishops of their provinces, and denying them the right to ordain, except with their sanction,¹ and at length the patriarchs of Rome extorted the right to appoint to all vacant sees, to determine all ecclesiastical causes, and to legislate for the church, and thereby reduced the whole body of the clergy and people of the western empire to an absolute vassalage to themselves.²

It was at that period, and under the promptings and guidance of those great prelates, that the church first formally apostatized from the faith and worship enjoined in the gospel, and embraced a false religion. The preceding century had been marked by a neglect and adulteration of the word of life, not by a public and legalized substitution of an opposite system in its place. It was not until after the accession of Constantine, that the worship of the cross, the superstitious and idolatrous regard of relics, the invocation of saints, the homage of images, and other chief elements of the great anti-christian system, were introduced, and made emphatically the religion of the nationalized church.

I. The patriarchs, metropolitans, and archbishops of that and the following ages, breathed a pestilence of false doctrine from their lips which infected the whole body of the church, and carried spiritual death to myriads of their people.

The ascription to the image of the cross by Constantine of a divine virtue, and pretence that it was through that that he gained his victories over Maxentius, Licinius, and other enemies,³ if not the device of the prelates whom he made his associates

¹ Dupin de Ant. Eccl. Discip. Dissert. i. c. 13. ² Ibid. Dissert. ii.

³ Constantine related that as he was about to attempt the conquest of Italy from Maxentius, the form of a cross was displayed to him in the sky with the inscription, "Conquer by this;" that in the following night Christ appeared to him in a dream with a cross in his hand, and directed him to make one like it, and use it as an auxiliary or protection against his enemies in battle.—Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. i. c. 28. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 3. He accordingly changed the Roman standard called labarum into the form of a cross, appointed a select band to bear and protect it, treated it as a defence against his enemies, caused it to be borne before him as he advanced to battle, and sent it at the head of the fresh troops which he dispatched to support or rally his line when severely pressed by the enemy. It was regarded by the soldiers as a symbol of the presence of the Deity, and honored with a religious homage.—Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. i. c. 30, 31. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 4, and he ascribed to it his victories. "The emperor learning the deity in it by experience, honored that victorious standard; for by that the hostile armies were made to give way, and the powers of invisible demons put to flight; by that the haughtiness of the enemies of God was brought down; by that the tongues of the reviling and impious were silenced; by that the barbarous tribes were brought into subjection, and the spirits of the superstitious convicted of deceit."—Eusebii Oratio de laud. Const. c. ix. c. xi. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 8.

alike in the camp and the palace, at least received the sanction of the great bishops of the age, and gained a general belief;¹ and it was during his reign, and under the direction of Macarius, the metropolitan of Jerusalem, that the pretended discovery was made of Christ's sepulchre and cross,² and the homage of those objects which has continued through fifteen centuries introduced into the church.³

It was at the same period, and under the same auspices, that a miraculous virtue was first ascribed to the relics of the apostles, prophets, martyrs, and other saints, costly edifices erected over their graves, and a public and idolatrous homage paid to them. Constantine not only approved and enjoined their commemoration,⁴ but set the example of an idolatrous regard, by the erection especially of a temple at Constantinople in honor of the apostles, in which he prepared his own sepulchre, under the expectation of benefit from the homage to be paid to them, where at his burial prayers were offered for him by the bishops and people,⁵ and at length, according to Philostorgius, incense and other symbols of worship presented to his statue, and supplications offered for protection from calamities.⁶ No indications

¹ Eusebii Oratio de laud. Const. c. vi., ix., xi.

² Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Sulpicius, who give a history of the discovery of the cross, relate that the pagans having, in their endeavors to obstruct the progress of Christianity, covered Golgotha with a deep layer of earth, and erected on it a temple to Venus, the knowledge of the place where Christ was crucified was lost; but that Helena, the mother of the emperor, visiting Jerusalem, and desiring to pay homage to the wood of the cross, the site where it lay interred was revealed by supernatural signals and dreams, and at the emperor's command an excavation was made, which disclosed the tomb in which Christ was buried, and near by the three crosses on which he and the malefactors were crucified, with the tablet on which Pilate inscribed his title; that the tablet, however, being unfastened, and it thence being uncertain which was the cross of Christ, Macarius, assuming that it possessed a miraculous virtue, identified it by applying them in succession to a sick lady. The first two proved inefficacious, but on the touch of the third she was instantly restored. The empress, presuming that the nails were endowed with an equal virtue, transmitted them to her son, who appropriated them partly to his own defence, causing a portion of them to be wrought into his helmet, and partly to the protection of his horse, having them worked into the bridle.—Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 17. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. i. Theodoriti Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 18. Sulp. Severi Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. pp. 380-392.

³ Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. iii. c. 30. Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 17. Sulpicius Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. pp. 387-392. Eusebius represents that none, except those who were ignorant of divine things, derided the honors paid by Constantine to the sepulchre and cross.—Do laud. c. xi.

⁴ Const. Orat. ad Sanct. Cœt. c. xii. Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 23.

⁵ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 58, 59, 60, 71. Sozomeni Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 34.

⁶ This enemy of God accuses the Christians of propitiating the image of Constantine placed on a porphyry column with sacrifices, paying it homage with lamps

appear in the histories of the period of the existence of any such martyria anterior to those erected by him at Jerusalem and Constantinople; no structures of that kind having been destroyed by Diocletian or Licinius, or restored by Constantine on his accession to supreme power.¹ Within a brief period, however, that species of superstition and demonolatry became general. During the reign of his son Constantius the supposed relics of the apostle Andrew and the evangelists Luke and Timothy were conveyed from Achaia and Ionia, and deposited in a basilica erected by him at Constantinople near the tomb of his father.² Soon miracles were represented to be wrought at such shrines, and even at the graves of eminent monks and martyrs after the removal of their remains, as at the sepulchre of Hilarion, both whence he was stolen and where he was reburied;³ of Babylas at Antioch,⁴ at the church erected in honor of John Baptist near Constantinople,⁵ and at the tomb of the forty martyrs. The temples erected to the saints and martyrs became very numerous, even during the reign of Constantius, as is apparent from the demolition of several at Miletus by order of Julian,⁶ and were greatly multiplied after the death of the latter in consequence of the indignities shown by him to their relics and graves.⁷ A fanatical passion to possess the remains of prophets, apostles, and confessors seized the general mind. Dreams, visions, and prophecies were represented as the means of their discovery, and all the deceitful arts of avarice and ambition employed to impose on the credulous multitude.⁸ Their presence was regard-

and incense, addressing prayers to it as to God, and offering supplications for protection from calamities.—Philostorgii Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 18.

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 1, 2; lib. x. c. 2. De Vita Const. lib. ii. c. 2 c. 46.

² Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 18. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 3, c. 26. Theodoriti Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 15, c. 17; lib. v. c. 39. Philostorg. Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 2. Theod. Lect. Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

³ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 14.

⁴ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 19.

Ibid. lib. vii. c. 24.

⁵ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 20.

⁷ Heron. Epist. ad Eustach. Baronii Annal. an 362, no. 137–148.

⁸ “The honor of discovering the forty martyrs was assigned to the princess Pulcheria, the sister of the emperor; for the martyr Thyrsis, in whose commemoration a temple had been erected, appeared to her thrice, indicated where they were buried, and directed that they should be removed to his basilica, that they might enjoy the same station and honor; and at the same time the forty robed in white revealed themselves to her.”—Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 2. Augustine represents that the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius at Milan, of whose existence no one before had ever heard, were revealed to Ambrose in a dream.—De Civit. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 8.

“It was decreed by the fifth council of Carthage that the altars erected in fields

ed as necessary to the consecration of places of worship,¹ and relied on for the protection of cities,² miraculous answers to prayers offered at their shrines were expected and imagined to be received,³ and a higher trust for the blessings of this life and for salvation reposed in the creatures thus exalted to deities, than in the Ruler of the universe,⁴ and the great favorers and propa-

and public ways, as though in honor of martyrs, where it was proved no body or relics of martyrs had been interred, should be demolished, if possible, by the bishops of those places; that if it could not be done without a tumult, they should admonish the people not to frequent them; and that no monument of martyrs should be received as authentic, except where a body or some relics that were undoubted had been buried, or the history could be verified."—Labbei Concil. tom. iii. p. 971. The removal, deception, and sale of relics was at length forbidden by law, but permission was given to whoever pleased to erect edifices for the veneration of the martyrs, wherever they were known to be buried.—Cod. Theod. lib. ix. tit. 17, c. 7.

¹ "As the heretics have deprived the church of the sight of the venerable images, and left other customs, which, both according to the Scriptures and tradition, ought to be resumed and observed, we therefore decree that a deposite be made of the holy relics of martyrs in whatever temples have been consecrated without them, and that the bishop who hereafter consecrates a temple without holy relics, shall be deposed as a transgressor of ecclesiastical traditions."—Labbei Concil. tom. xiii. p. 751.

Gregory the Great assigns it as a reason of his not complying with the request of the empress Constantina, that he would send her the head of St. Paul to be deposited in a church erected to his honor, that the bodies of Peter and Paul flashed with such miracles and terrors in their churches, that it was not possible to approach them even for prayer without the utmost alarm; that when his predecessor had desired to change the silver that was over the sacred remains of Peter, though it was distant more than fifteen feet, a sign appeared to him of no small terror; and that when he in like manner wished to amend something over the body of Paul, as it was necessary to make an excavation near the sepulchre, the person having charge of the place venturing to raise some bones which he discovered not belonging to it, that he might remove them to another place, mournful signs appeared, and he suddenly died.—Epist. 30, lib. iv. Indic. xii. pp. 708, 709.

² Evagrii Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 13. Chrysostom says of the martyrs of Egypt, "The bodies of those saints fortify the city more effectually for us than impregnable walls of adamant, and like towering rocks placed around on every side, repel not only the assaults of enemies that are visible, but the insidious stratagems also of invisible demons, and counteract and defeat every artifice of the devil as easily as a strong man overturns the toys of children."—Homil. 70, in Mart. Egypt. tom. i. p. 770.

³ "Remember with me the martyr," says Basil, "as many as have been aided by him through dreams, as many as have here enjoyed him as an assistant in prayer, by every one whom when invoked he has aided in labors, by every one whom he has conducted back from a journey, by every one whom he has raised up from sickness, by those to whom he has given back children that had died, by those whose destined period of life he has extended."—Homil. xxvi. de Mart. Mam. tom. i. p. 513.

⁴ Gregory Nazianzen asserts that demons were expelled and diseases healed by the apostles and others who were martyred for the sake of Christ, and who were celebrated by honors and festivities; and represents that their bodies had power equal to holy souls, whether touched or worshipped, and drops of their blood and

gators of this debasing idolatry were the archpriests of the church, Gregory of Naziansen, Basil of Cæsarea, Epiphanius of Cyprus, Chrysostom of Constantinople, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, and the patriarchs of Rome.

The ascription thus of miraculous virtues to the bodies of the dead, naturally led to an equal homage of their spirits. The invocation of the saints as powerful intercessors with God, and able to avert all the calamities of life, and confer all temporal and spiritual blessings, was accordingly introduced at the same period and by the same teachers. "How often," says Basil in his homily on the forty martyrs, "have you labored that you might find one entreating the Lord for you. Here are forty with one voice offering prayer. Where two or three are assembled in the name of the Lord, there is he in the midst of them. But where there are forty, who can doubt God's presence? Let him who is afflicted fly to the forty; let him who is rejoicing recur to them;—the one that he may obtain release from his troubles, the other that his prosperity may be continued. Here a pious woman obtains her request offering prayer for children, asking the return of her husband on a journey, and health when sick. Let your petitions be confided to the martyrs." Gregory Naziansen said at the obsequies of his father, "he believed he now fulfilled the office of a shepherd to his flock by intercession, in a higher degree than while on earth as a teacher, in proportion as he had approached nearer to God, inasmuch as he had shaken off the

the least memorials of their passion, efficacy equal to their bodies.—Orat. iii. adv. Julianum, tom. i. pp. 76, 77.

Chrysostom represents that God being gracious, and presenting to us innumerable motives to salvation, marked out the veneration of the dead among others as an appropriate method of inviting us to virtue, by leaving with us the relics of the saints; asserts that their sepulchres held the next rank in power after the word, to excite the souls of those who beheld them to an equal zeal; and affirms that whoever by chance approaches such a depository, immediately feels a clear sensation of that influence, for the sight of the coffin strikes, awes, and arouses the soul, and causes it to be affected, precisely as though the dead were present, visible, and united in the prayer.—Lib. de Bab. tom. i. pp. 668, 669.

He says of the martyrs accordingly: "Let us frequently go to them. Let us touch their coffins. Let us embrace their relics with faith, that we may derive from them some blessing; for as soldiers showing their wounds speak with boldness to the king, so these bearing in their hands their heads which were cut off, are able to obtain whatever they ask from the King of heaven. Let us therefore go there with strong faith and fervent desire, and from the sight of the holy monuments and from the consideration of their rewards, gather great treasures that we may be able to pass the present life according to the will of God, sail to that port with much merchandise, and attain the kingdom of heaven."—Homil. 40, in Sanct. Mart. Juvent. et Max. tom. i. pp. 488, 489.

¹ Homil. xx. in quadrag. Martyr. Tom. i. p. 459.

chains of the body, and become free from the dregs that obstructed his spirit."¹ Chrysostom also: "You have doubtless a strong affection for these saints. With this ardor therefore let us prostrate ourselves before their relics; let us embrace their urns, for the shrines of the martyrs can exert a great power, as their bones have a mighty energy; and not only on the day of their feast, but on others also let us assiduously apply to them, let us invoke them, let us entreat them to be our patrons, for they have great boldness not only in this life, but also after death, and far the greatest after death, for they now bear the marks of Christ, and showing their stigmata are all-powerful with the Almighty. Since, then, such is their power and favor with God, by assiduous application to them and entreaty we shall obtain through them the compassion of God."² The eternal Word was thus set aside as the intercessor, his sacrifice and obedience rejected as the ground of reliance for sanctification, pardon, and eternal life, and creatures helpless and guilty exalted in his place, and treated as both superior to him in merit, and as exerting a higher influence in the divine government. No apostasy from the Almighty can be more absolute than this, more injurious to his rights, or more fatal to the apostate himself. It is to reduce the eternal Word below the guilty creatures whom he has redeemed, to impute his peculiar attributes, prerogatives, and agency to them, and to trust in them instead of him for the infinite blessings which he alone can bestow.

The superstitious regard of the eucharistic elements, which at length gave birth to the doctrine of transubstantiation and the idolatry of the mass, had its origin at the same period and with the same great prelates. The office of the bread and wine as symbols of the body and blood of Christ was exhibited as profoundly mysterious. They were represented as fraught with a saving and miraculous power, and the arts of declamation, trick,

¹ Orat. 19, tom. i. p. 288. Gregory, at the close of his oration in commemoration of Basil, directly invokes him. "Look down on us from heaven, O divine and sacred personage, and the thorn of the flesh given us by God for our discipline either by thine intercessions repress, or persuade that we may bear it with fortitude, and direct our whole life to that which is most beneficial. And if we are to remove, receive us there in thy holy tabernacles, that living together and more clearly beholding the holy and blessed trinity, glimpses of which we have attained here, we may there fix our desires and receive the reward of the contests which we have here maintained and endured." Tom. i. p. 373.

² Homil. 51, de Bern. et Prosd. tom. i. p. 568, 569. Similar passages might be added from Augustine, de Civit. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 10; Hilary, Psalm 129, p. 439; Epiphanius, Hæres. 75, and the other principal bishops of that and the following ages.

and mystery employed to render them objects of superstitious and idolatrous veneration to the multitude. Thus Chrysostom : " But there is still opportunity to approach that fearful table. Let us all go therefore with becoming gravity and abstinence. Let no Judas be there, let no malicious person be there, no one having venom, nor bearing one thing on the lips, but another in the thoughts : for Christ himself is present who adorned this table ; and he adorns it now ; for it is not man who causes the elements to become the body and blood of Christ, but Christ himself who was crucified for us. The priest stands and goes through the form, uttering the words, but the power and the grace are of God. This, he says, is my body. That utterance *transforms the elements* ; and as the voice which said ' Increase ye and be multiplied and fill the earth,' though spoken but once, is efficacious through all time, so this voice being uttered at every table in the churches from that to the present day and till his advent, works the completion of the sacrifice."¹ Gregory the Great said, " During the present life, which we see is passing away, we ought to continue daily to present the offering of tears to God, and immolate the sacrifice of his flesh and blood ; for this sacrifice alone can save the soul from eternal destruction, which renews to us through the mysteries that death of the only-begotten, who, as he has risen from the dead, dies no more, and death no more has dominion over him. While however in himself living immortally and incorruptibly, he is yet in the mystery of the sacred oblation immolated for us again ; for in that his body is taken, his flesh is distributed to the salvation of his people, his blood is poured not only into the hands of the unbelieving, but into the mouths of the believers. Let us therefore consider what kind of sacrifice that is which for our absolution perpetually imitates the passion of the only-begotten Son. For what believer can doubt that in the hour of immolation, at the voice of the priest, the heavens are opened, that the choirs of angels are present at that mystery of Jesus Christ, that the lowest are associated with the highest, the earthly joined with the celestial, and the visible and the invisible united in one."²

At length in 1215, Innocent III., in the fourth Lateran council, formally asserted the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and made it an element of the papal faith. " The universal church of the believing, out of which no one can be saved, is one, in which Jesus Christ is both

¹ Serm. 32, de proditione Jud. tom. v. p. 416.

² Dialog. lib. iv. c. 58, p. 472.

the priest and the sacrifice, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the species of bread and wine, being transubstantiated, the bread into his body, the wine into his blood by divine power, so that to perfect the mystery of unity we may receive of his nature that which he assumed of ours; and this sacrament, moreover, no one can make except a priest who has been rightly ordained according to the keys of the church, which Jesus Christ himself intrusted to the apostles and their successors."¹

The homage of the saints naturally led to the introduction of their pictures and sculptures into the basilicas and churches, and thence to the formal worship of images. Both pictures and statues appear to have gained admission to the churches in some degree, even before the close of the fourth century;² became not uncommon in the fifth;³ received the countenance of the popes of Rome;⁴ and though opposed, and prohibited for a period in the eastern empire, at length in the reign of Irene received the sanction of the second council of Nicæa, and the civil government,⁵ and have ever since been the principal objects of homage in the Greek and Latin churches.

Though not unknown at an earlier period, it was not until this age and through the agency chiefly of the great prelates, Gregory

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. p. 982.

² The council of Eliberis, usually referred to the year 305, prohibited the introduction of pictures into the churches, or delineations of the objects of worship on the walls. Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 264. It appears from the representation of Basil in his Oration on Barlaam, that pictures of the acts and sufferings of the martyrs were at that period placed in the churches. Tom. i. p. 443.

³ Augustine implies that there were in his day many of Christ and the apostles. Consens. Evang. i. 16. Evagrius relates that an image of the mother of Christ was suspended by a rope in the prison at Antioch, which on being addressed by an unacceptable suppliant, turned its face from him. Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 18.

⁴ "It came to our knowledge lately that on seeing persons adoring the images in the churches, you broke them and threw them out, and we approve of your wish that no one should worship that which is made with hands, but suggest that you ought not to have broken them; for pictures are used in the churches in order that they who are unacquainted with letters may at least read, by looking on the walls, what they are not able to read in books. You ought therefore to preserve them, but forbid the people's worshipping them, so that the unlettered may have the means of gaining a knowledge of history, and yet not sin by the adoration of the paintings." Gregorii Mag. Epist. 102, lib. ix. Ind. ii.

⁵ "We ordain that venerable and holy images, modelled after the form of the venerable and life-giving cross, by colors, mosaic, or any other materials, should be dedicated and placed in the consecrated temples of God,—especially the image of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that of our spotless queen the mother of God, of the venerable angels, and finally of all holy men, in order that all who contemplate them may come to the memory and desire of their prototypes and offer them an honorary adoration." Labbei Concil. tom. xiii. p. 730. This decree was sanctioned by Hadrian, bishop of Rome, *ibid.* pp. 536, 537.

Naziansen, Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, and the popes, that the doctrine of purgatorial fire was generally received, prayers offered for the dead, and masses in order to their deliverance from punishment and admission to paradise, which in the following century became a most important element in the anti-christian system of the Latin church, and was made the means of boundless wealth to the clergy and infinite deception to the people.

The doctrine was held in the days of Augustine, that souls are benefited by supplicating the aid of the martyrs. "When the place where the body of a beloved friend is buried, is associated with the name of some venerated martyr, affection prompts the commendation of his soul to that martyr; and when this affection is exhibited to the dead by believers who were beloved, there is no doubt that it is beneficial to those who while living acquired a merit of such aids after this life."¹ The doctrine of purgatorial fire was generally held also. "Some suffer temporary punishments in this life only; others after death, others both now and then, before however the last judgment. But all who endure temporary punishments after death, are not to enter the everlasting punishments that are to follow that judgment; for to some that which is not remitted in this, is to be remitted in the future world."² In the age of Gregory the Great, the practice was introduced of offering masses for the expiation of souls in purgatory. "If offences are not unpardonable after death, the sacred oblation of the life-giving victim is accustomed to aid souls much even after death, so that they sometimes seem to desire it."³

It was decreed by a French council in 813, that prayers should

¹ Augustini de Cura pro Mort. c. 6, p. 519.

² August. de Civit. Dei, lib. xxi. c. 13; lib. xxii. c. 10.

³ He goes on to relate, that it being discovered that a sick monk in his monastery had violated the rules by secreting three pieces of gold, he directed the fraternity not to give him any aid at the moment of death, but to denounce him as an out-cast, and bury him, not with the brethren, but on a dung-heap; that thirty days after his departure, he began to pity his dead brother, to dwell on his punishment with great pain, and to inquire whether there were any means of deliverance, and calling to him Pretiosus, the overseer of the monastery, said sadly, "It is a long time that the brother who died has been tortured in the fire. We ought to bestow on him some token of love, and yield him such aid as we can that he may be delivered. Go therefore and offer sacrifice for him for the next thirty days, taking care that no day passes without the immolation of the salutary victim for his absolution; that Pretiosus departed and obeyed his directions, and at the end of the thirty days the dead brother appeared in vision to one of the fraternity, and on being asked, How are you? answered that he had been in misery up to that time, but was now happy, as he had that day received the communion." Gregorii Dial. lib. iv. c. 55.

be daily offered for the dead in the sacrifice of the mass. "It seems proper that in all solemnities of the mass, the Lord should be invoked for the spirits of the dead."—"Let the holy church therefore retain this ancient custom and commend to the Lord in the solemnization of the mass and other prayers, the spirits of those who sleep, as Augustine said; supplications are not to be omitted for the spirits of the dead which the church undertakes to present for all who have died in the Christian and Catholic society, and if their names are not recited, in a general commemoration, so that to those who left no parents, children, or other relatives or friends for that office, it may be discharged by the common holy mother."¹ This rule was incorporated by Gratian in his collection of the canons, and became the law of the Latin church.² And finally, the council of Trent declared the sacrifice of the mass to be propitiatory, as well for the dead as the living, and decreed that it should be offered not only for the sins of living believers, but for the dead in Christ who had not yet become fully purified.³

To this pestiferous combination, was at length formally added in the Latin church, the doctrine implied in these errors, of justification by one's own righteousness, or the merits of other creatures; of satisfaction for one's sins by penance and the sufferings of purgatory, by which the obedience and expiation of Christ were not only denied their proper office, but wholly set aside; and finally an ascription to the pope of the throne and rights of God, and power on his own conditions to forgive sins, and legalize and sanction all forms of transgression both of divine and human laws.

Sozomen affirms that the bishops who were summoned by Constantine to explain his vision of the cross, taught him that an expiation for sins and means of salvation were provided for offenders, by initiation into the mysteries of baptism and the eucharist, and abstinence thereafter from sin. As few however, and the godlike only, were adequate to that, they taught that a second expiation was instituted by penance.⁴

The prelates of the fourth age began to release offenders, on account of illness and other causes, from fasting and other penances prescribed in order to readmission to communion.⁵ On introducing the doctrine of expiation by the mass, they undertook

¹ Labbei Concil, tom. xiv. p. 102.

² Decret. Gratiani de Consecrat. dist. i. c. 72.

³ Concil. Trid. sess. xxii. c. 2.

⁴ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 3.

⁵ Labbei Concil. tom. ii. pp. 515, 674.

to make satisfaction for sins by that offering, and release offenders from liability to punishment for the crimes they had committed,¹ and at length completed the system of indulgences by granting licenses to commit sin in all the forms the purchasers of the right might desire, without obnoxiousness to punishment.²

It was thus these great chiefs of the hierarchies that gave birth to this apostate religion. They have in every subsequent age been quoted as authority for its impious doctrines and idolatrous rites, and though the great body of the subordinate clergy united in its propagation, it was largely through their example and dictation. Had it not been for their agency it could never have supplanted the religion of Christ, and had they at any period united in its rejection, they might have arrested its prevalence, and perhaps banished it from the church.

Such in this relation is the verification which for fifteen hundred years they have presented of the symbol, breathing into the atmosphere of the church a deadly blast, that like the pests of the fourth century, has tainted all who inhaled it with the elements of spiritual death.

¹ "The church and theological schools use the term indulgence, to denote a remission of the punishment that often remains to be suffered, after the remission of a fault and reconciliation has been obtained, by the sacrament of penance, which remission the supreme pontiffs, in paternal condescension to their children and pity for their infirmity, are accustomed to concede at certain times, not however without some reasonable cause."—Bellarmini de Indulg. c. i.

² "The fourth species of indulgence is the remission of penance or punishment, which began to be introduced in the tenth century; in view of some laborious work to be undertaken of obvious utility to the church, and was usually proposed in this form: Whoever shall perform this work, or endeavor to his utmost to perform it, shall obtain a remission of all sins."—Van Espen de Indulg. c. i. s. 9.

"From this indulgence another species followed; for since it was assumed that it was lawful to release wholly from penance and grant a remission of all sins to those who contributed money for an expedition against infidels or heretics, it did not appear why it might not be lawful also to remit the whole or at least a part of penance, to him who should bestow a gift towards any other pious undertaking, such as the erection or reparation of a church, monastery, hospital, or any other ecclesiastical building."—Van Espen de Indulg. c. i. s. 14.

In the twelfth century another formula was introduced, by which absolution was given to those who devoted property to pious uses, visited certain churches, or recited certain prayers.—Van Espen de Indulg. c. i. s. 14. They who undertook a crusade for the conquest of the Holy Land from the Turks, were promised by Urban II. and Eugenius III. a release from all penance for their sins, and if death overtook them, a full remission and the rewards of eternal life.—Bullarii Mag. tom. i. p. 37. Baronii Annal. anno 1095. So late as 1695, Innocent XII granted a plenary indulgence and remission of all their sins to all believers of either sex, who, truly penitent, making confession and receiving the eucharist, should visit the church of St. Francis of Assisi on any day in the year, and offer prayer for the concord of the Christian princes, the extirpation of heresy, and the exaltation of holy mother church.—Bullarii Mag. tom. vi. p. 262.

II. They employed as an instrument of destruction, the sword of the second horseman, the symbol of the spiritual sword, or ecclesiastical authority by which men are subjected to spiritual death. As death by the sword, in distinction from famine and disease, is a death by violence, so a resembling spiritual death must be by an analogous violence, in distinction from a deprivation of knowledge which is symbolized by famine, or an infusion of false doctrine denoted by pestilence. And as when a fatal wound is inflicted by the sword, the body by its own constitution works an immediate death by the expulsion of the blood, so, in order to analogy, the wound that produces spiritual death, must be such that the subject of it works his destruction necessarily by the rejection and abjuration of the means of life, in contradistinction from being deprived of spiritual sustenance on the one hand and inhaling a pest on the other. And such is a compulsory apostasy, or abjuration of essential truth at the dictation of authority. Its effect on the soul is like that of a deadly wound on the body. Every act under it is a rejection of God and his salvation, removes the spirit to a greater distance from him, and precipitates it to a more inevitable and speedy death.

And the great chiefs of the hierarchies have inflicted death in this manner on a vast scale. The persuasion that bishops have legislative authority over the faith and worship of the church, and that the pope is the vicar of Christ and of absolute power to determine doctrines and rites, placed the Greek and Latin communions at the will of the great prelates of those churches, who held the power of summoning councils, and determining and executing decrees ; and it has been through that medium that they have wrought their mightiest effects. Authority has been the great sword by which they have at every period struck down the objections of reason, awed conscience into silence, and pierced the captive and helpless soul with a wound that worked inevitable and speedy death. It was thus by the decrees and anathemas of the council of Antioch in the reign of Constantius, that Eusebius patriarch of Constantinople endeavored to impose the Arian faith on the church.¹ It was thus by authority that Tarasius, patriarch of that city in the eighth century, endeavored to constrain the worship of images.² It was his own and the authority of councils, that Gregory VII. of Rome and his successors used to compel the acknowledgment of their usurped powers, and the ascription to them of honors that are due only to God.³ It was

¹ Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 8, c. 10. ² Labbei Concil. tom. xii. p. 1120-1128.

³ Labbei Concil. tom. xx.

by that that in the fifteenth century, Pius IV. strove to force back into apostasy the multitudes in the Latin church who had embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, and retain them in a hopeless vassalage to error;¹ and by that that from age to age myriads and millions who would have survived the famine and pestilence, have been precipitated to destruction. The renunciation of the most indisputable and essential truths, and assent to palpable and abhorrent errors, by Hosius, Berenger, Galileo, and thousands of others at the dictation of councils and popes, the facility with which the great body of the inferior clergy and whole nations have changed sides as power passed from the leaders of one party to those of another, and the abject submission with which the talented and learned of the Catholic communion accommodate their creed to the decrees of the pope, are emphatic exemplifications of the resistlessness of the power which this authority exerts over their faith.

III. They employed the agency also symbolized by the third horseman, to spread death throughout their territory; withholding the great truths of the gospel from their people, and subjecting them to a famine of the knowledge which is essential to spiritual life.

The agencies by which the church was reduced to a debasing and fatal ignorance of God, of the nature of religion, and the method of salvation through Christ, in the third century, were continued in the fourth and following ages, and carried to a greater extent. Fasting, celibacy, and the ignorance, debasement, and fanaticism of a solitary and ascetic life, were rendered by the extravagant commendations lavished on them by Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Naziansen, Ambrose, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Cyril of Jerusalem, Augustine, and the bishops of Rome, the fashionable religion. The Scriptures if not more neglected, were far more perverted, and made a fountain of darkness rather than light, by a wanton prostitution to the support of the false doctrines and idolatrous worship introduced by those prelates;² and the awe, the faith and the hope of the church drawn from God to relics, the tombs of prophets and martyrs, and redeemed and angelic spirits. But on the substitution for the Latin tongue, of the languages of the conquering nations throughout the western empire, the light of divine truth was almost wholly withdrawn from the

¹ Pii iv. Bul. sup. Jurament. profess. fidei.

² Photius in his history of the Paulicians, represents the Greek clergy of the seventh century, as having taught that the Scriptures were designed only for their perusal, not for the laity.—Photii Contra Manich. lib. i. pp. 100, 101.

great mass of the people. The Scriptures were not allowed for ages to be translated into those dialects,¹ public worship was conducted and instruction given only in Latin, which soon became unknown not only to the people at large, but to many of the clergy, and the great essentials of Christianity were as completely swept from the knowledge of the multitude as though they had never been revealed. Gregory VII. forbade the celebration of worship by the churches of Bohemia in the Slavonian dialect.² It was required by the council of Trent to be conducted in the Latin tongue,³ and the Scriptures have for ages been generally withheld from the people.⁴

IV. And finally they employed in this work of destruction the civil rulers of the ancient and modern empire, symbolized, as will be shown in the exposition of the twelfth, thirteenth, and other chapters, by the wild beasts of the earth.

The death inflicted through their agency is like that wrought directly by the horseman himself, a spiritual, not a corporeal death, and is inflicted by authority, not by the sword.

The right of legislating over the church, and dictating its faith and worship, was formally assumed by Constantine, and at least generally, if not universally, assented to by the bishops of the age. The emperors assembled councils, they ratified and gave legal force to their canons, they deposed and appointed bishops at their will, and punished the violation of their decrees in respect to religion like the greatest civil crimes, by banishment, confiscation, torture, and death. In the rivalries accordingly, and contests of the bishops with one another in the fourth, fifth, and following ages, they continually appealed to the emperors to determine their disputes and give efficacy to their will, and as the one or the other party rose into supremacy, invoked and em-

¹ The council of Toulouse in 1229 denied the laity the use and possession of the Scriptures. "The laity should not be allowed to have the books of the Old and New Testament, except perhaps a Psalter or Breviary for public worship, or the Hours of the blessed Mary; and we most strictly forbid their having those permitted books translated into the vulgar tongue."—*Labbei Concil. tom. xxiii. p. 197.*

² "Your nobility has despised, or lead to error if ill understood by common people. We therefore, by the authority of the blessed Peter, prohibit what you have unwisely asked, and command you to resist that presumption with all your power to the honor of the Omnipotent."—*Gregorii Epist. 11, lib. vii. Labbei tom. xx. p. 296.*

³ *Sess. xxii. c. 8.*

⁴ *Bellarmini de Verbo, lib. ii. c. 15.*

ployed the imperial authority to compel their antagonists to adopt their faith and conform to their worship.

Thus Macedonius, the Arian patriarch of Constantinople, immediately on his accession to power, employed the authority of Constantius and troops to force dissentients from his creed to conformity, and surpassed even the most cruel of the pagan persecutors in the ingenuity and barbarity of the tortures by which he endeavored to overcome their constancy.¹ His followers in like manner excited Valens to persecute those who refused to communicate with their party.² Theodosius and his sons, on the other hand, restored the churches to the orthodox, and drove the Arians from the city who refused to unite in their worship;³ and at length prohibited, by the severest penalties, all of whatever name who dissented from the established religion, from erecting churches, holding separate assemblies,⁴ or ordaining ministers;⁵ deprived them of the right of inheriting or transmitting property by will,⁶ excluded them from service in the palace and army,⁷ banished them from the cities and villages,⁸ confiscated their property,⁹ and endeavored by every species of constraint, forfeiture, and death itself, to force them to conform to the nationalized religion.¹⁰ The dictation and enforcement of the faith of the party in power on dissentients by civil authority, was approved by Ambrose,¹¹ Augustine,¹² and the other bishops of Africa, and was ever after employed by the dominant party. All the great errors of the apostate church were accordingly legalized by imperial authority, and given through that to gain a general prevalence. The veneration of relics was legalized by Theodosius; the usurpations of the patriarchs by Constantine, Theodosius, and Marcian; monkery and the celibacy of the clergy by a long succession of emperors; the invocation of saints and worship of images by Constantine and Irene; the primacy of the pope by Justinian. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the assumption by the popes of authority over the whole Latin church, — power to appoint to all vacant benefices, to determine all ecclesiastical causes, to depose bishops, to legislate over the church, to rescind and confirm civil laws, to dethrone princes, to

¹ Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 27. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 18.

² Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 2, 9, 16.

³ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. i. l. 3. Socratis H. E. lib. v. c. 7.

⁴ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 11, 15, 26, 30. ⁵ Ibid. l. 22.

⁶ Ibid. l. 17, 23, 25. ⁷ Ibid. l. 29, 42, 48. ⁸ Ibid. l. 18, 20, 30, 34.

⁹ Ibid. l. 44, 58. ¹⁰ Ibid. l. 51, 52, 53, 56, 60.

¹¹ Ambrosii Epist. 29, ad Theodos.; 34 Orat. de Exitu Theodos.

¹² Augustini Lib. ad Donat. c. 17, s. 22, tom. ix. Optati, lib. ii. c. vi. p. 63.

transfer kingdoms and crowns to whom they pleased, was ratified and legalized by most of the governments of Europe; and the civil authority has been employed accordingly by the popes to force into submission to their sway every body of dissenters that has appeared in the empire; the Paulicians, the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Wicklifites, the Lollards, the Bohemians, the Protestants of every nation and name. How vast the power is which the civil rulers have thus exerted, is seen from the fact that chiefly through their agency Protestantism made no progress after the Council of Trent, but rapidly declined, was soon exterminated from Portugal, Spain, Italy, and the islands of the Mediterranean, and for generations has been reduced to a shadow in some of the cantons of Switzerland, and in the empires of Austria and France.

In every relation this symbol has thus met a conspicuous verification in the great heads of the hierarchies, especially in those of the Greek and Latin church.

Power was given to this destroyer over a fourth part of the earth, by which doubtless the Roman empire is meant, the territory over which both the heads of the hierarchies and the civil rulers whom the wild beasts denote, had dominion.

The truth of this construction is confirmed by the incongruities that mark all other expositions. Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, Rosenmuller, regard the horseman as pestilence. But that is to substitute the instrument for the actor;—disease, the ordinary cause of death, being the peculiar means by which he inflicts it, in contradistinction from its extraordinary causes, the sword, famine, and wild beasts. They also regard the death which he inflicts as a corporeal death, and the instruments those literally which are enumerated in the passage, which is to exhibit the symbol and the thing symbolized as of the same species, and is in contradiction to analogy. And finally they exhibit the events of the Jewish insurrections under Claudius, or war under Nero and Vespasian, as its fulfilment; which is to assume either that the Apocalypse was written long after the events denoted by the seal had taken place, or to assign a wholly unauthorized and incredible date to the visions.

Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Lowman, Mr. Whiston, Bishop Newton, Mr. Elliott, and many others, exhibit essentially the same views of the symbol, representing the death which it foreshows as corporeal, the instruments those literally which the passage recites, and the wars, famines, pestilences, and ravages by wild beasts, by which the Roman em-

pire was afflicted from Maximin to Valerian, as the fulfilment ; which is in like manner to set aside their symbolic character, and make the representative and thing represented of the same species. If the wild beasts of this passage are to be taken literally, why are not those also of the thirteenth and other chapters ? Or on what ground, if it be denied to this, can a symbolical character be ascribed to any other portions of the book ?

Mr. Brightman dissents from their views only in admitting that the wild beasts may have a symbolic meaning, and denote the tyrannical emperors of that period.

Vitringa founds his interpretation on the same principles also, but exhibits the Saracens and Turks as the destroyers whom the symbol denotes.

Cocceius exhibits the rider as the sorceress of the seventeenth chapter, and the death she inflicts as spiritual, but the grave as the kings and princes who support her by their influence and compel their subjects to listen to her seduction. But the latter is against analogy. As this destroyer of natural life or of bodies, is a symbol of destroyers of spiritual life or souls, so the grave in which dead bodies are placed, is a symbol of the world of darkness into which lost souls descend. There is no such resemblance between the grave and usurping rulers who employ their power in compelling their subjects to idolatry, as fits it to represent them in that relation. They are living agents ; the grave is wholly passive.

Mr. Faber regards the horseman as a symbol of the Roman empire, and those of the preceding seals as representatives of the empires of Babylonia, Media, and Greece. That, however, is in the first place to treat the visions as exhibiting the past in place of the future, which is expressly against the title of the book, and the representation by the Redeemer that that which was to be shown to the apostle, was what was shortly to come to pass, not what had taken place in former ages ; and is to render the import of the whole series of symbols totally uncertain. If those under the first four seals relate to past ages and empires, what certainty is there that many of the others are not merely historic, instead of prophetic ? How is it to be determined that any species of them respect the future ? Next, it exhibits living beings as symbols of mere territories, which is against analogy. And finally it is founded avowedly on the assumption, though inconsistently with the interpretation of the horseman as denoting an empire, that the symbol and that which is symbol-

ized are of the same species ; or that a warrior symbol denotes a military power.

Mr. Keith regards the symbols of the first four seals as representing four religions, Christianity, Mahometanism, Popery, and Infidelity, which is to make living agents symbols of systems of doctrine or thoughts and opinions, and is wholly against analogy. What resemblance is there between a horse and rider, and propositions or modes of worship true or false ? Living agents are symbols only of intelligent agents ; never of abstractions, characteristics, thoughts, or acts.

Dean Woodhouse approaches nearer a just construction, as he regards the church, not the civil empire, as the scene of the symbolized agency, and its teachers and rulers as the destroyers. He errs like the others, however, in regarding the death as corporeal, which is to make the symbol and thing symbolized of the same species ; and exhibits hades not as the grave, but the receptacle of the spirits of the dead, which is to make the symbol the representative of itself, and is therefore, it being in this instance unnecessary, a deviation from analogy.

Mr. Stuart interprets the first four seals as denoting the invasion of Judea by the Romans under Nero, and slaughter, famine, and pestilence as attendants of that war ; but denies that the symbolic agents are to be regarded as representing particular agents, or the symbolic events particular events. But that in the first place overthrows his application of the prophecy to Judea. If the agents are not representative of specific agents, nor the effects of particular effects, by what law can the scene be regarded as the representative of a particular scene ? Even if right in translating $\gamma\tilde{\eta}$, the land, instead of the earth, he clearly, on his rule of construction, can with no more propriety assume that Judea was the theatre of the invasion, bloodshed, famine, and pestilence, than any other land or lands in which those calamities have since taken place. The symbols can then be considered as only showing that there was to be an invasion somewhere, somewhere bloodshed, somewhere famine, and somewhere pestilence.

But his denial that any correspondence is to be sought between the symbolized and symbolic agents, is equally subversive of his application of the prophecy, and of the whole representative character of the symbols. He can offer no reason for setting aside the representative office of the symbolic agent, that will not equally require the rejection of the representative character of the action which that agent exerts, and the effects to which he gives

birth. But if neither of them fulfil any office, nor have any necessary significance, if the interpreter be at liberty to deny the one or the other as the exigences of his theory may require, it is obviously vain to attempt a solution of the prophecy, or to imagine that it has a demonstrative or probable meaning. Such an assumption, however, is as unworthy of an interpreter of symbols, as it were of a philologist to deny that substantives and verbs are uniformly signs of specific voices that are representative of ideas. His error indeed in regard to symbols, is such as his would be in philology, who should assume that terms denoting agents are never to be regarded as of any specific significance, but only the verbs that express the agency they exert; and should hold accordingly that the history by Josephus, of the invasion of Judea by the Romans, and of the slaughters, conflagrations, famines, and pestilences of that war, is to be regarded as simply relating that such events took place at that period in Judea, but as giving no information whatever in respect to the agents by whom they were produced or occasioned, or the persons by whom they were suffered.

But he proceeds in his whole system of explication on the assumption equally mistaken, that symbols have no meaning but that which it is the prerogative of philology to unfold; confounding thereby the office of the mere translator and verbal expositor, with that of the interpreter of representative agents and actions, than which no two things are more wholly distinct and diverse. As well might a philologist assert, that to translate the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid from Greek into English, and verify the sense ascribed to the terms by examples, is identically the same as to make out a demonstration of the proposition by a diagram. The tasks of the philologist and of the interpreter, in respect to symbols, are as unlike as those of a mere translator of Euclid and a geometrician who verifies his theorems; the office of the philologist being simply to give the meaning of the terms in which the symbol is described in the Greek, in equivalent expressions in English, and to sustain his version, if need be, by proofs from the usage of the Scriptures and other Greek writings. But in doing that, he obviously does nothing whatever towards the explication of the symbol itself. To assume that he does, is to deny that it has any representative character. The work of the philologist is only preparatory to the higher task of the interpreter, whose peculiar office it is, in the first place, to unfold the principle of symbolization, next to show to what department of life or nature the symbolic agent belongs, and what

analogous species it must be regarded as representing, and finally to verify the prediction, if it have been fulfilled, by showing that such agents have appeared on the theatre of the world, and exerted actions and produced effects that correspond to the symbolization.

Mr. Stuart has accordingly mistaken the office of the philologist and the interpreter in respect to the Apocalypse, in the same manner as he would confound the work of a mere translator and a mathematician, who should assume that to transfer the *Principia* of Newton from Latin into English, is precisely the same as to make out a demonstration of the propositions of that work. The whole of his expositions accordingly that are framed in accordance with that assumption, are false. He is equally unsuccessful also in his deviations from it; as when he allows a representative significance to the symbols, he either assumes that the agent and action foreshown are of the same species as the symbols by which they are represented, or violates in some other relation the laws of analogy.

The great heads of the eastern and western hierarchies thus present a conspicuous and terrible counterpart to the symbol. The nearer we approach them, and the fuller we discern their character, the clearer we see in them the gigantic form and malignant aspect of this demon destroyer, and trace in theirs the history of his dreadful ravages. They have been for fifteen centuries the principal actors in the scene, striding over every part of the Roman empire, and especially the ten kingdoms, and filling the atmosphere through height and depth with their pestilential breath. The vast regions of the east and south, the plains and vales of Greece, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and the British Isles, the sequestered valleys, the deep glens of the mountains, the lofty hills, have been the scene of their devastating agency; nor, although that is their theatre, has their influence been limited to that vast empire. Their poisoned blast has drifted around the coast of Africa to the sultry realms of Malabar and the distant east, wafted off to the verdant Isles, and swept across the Atlantic and Pacific seas.

The symbols of the first four seals thus represent the teachers and rulers of the church from the period of the visions on to the fall of antichrist. And what an exact, what a conspicuous, what an impressive exhibition they form of the principal characters they have assumed;—the first, of the faithful and successful, not only of the earliest age when they predominated, but all, however few, and however humble their station of every subsequent

period ; the second, of the ambitious and contentious who usurped an unauthorized dominion over the church, and distracted and wasted it by strifes and misrule ; the third, the unfaithful and treacherous who perverted their office to the suppression and adulteration of the truth, and reduced their flocks to famine and misery ; the last, the great archpriests of apostasy who, usurping the throne and rights of God, introduced new objects of homage, a new worship, and new conditions of pardon ; rendered their teachings a moral pestilence that taints and kills all who fall under its power ; and made the subordinate ranks of the ministry and the civil rulers also their instruments in the work of destruction.

Very different are the seals that follow ;—the fifth disclosing the views and feelings with which the martyrs pass into the invisible world, and their justification and admission to rest till the domination of antichrist shall reach its close ; the sixth, the fall of the tyrannical governments which is to take place at the advent of Christ ; and the last displaying other actors and other successions of events from the early ages on to the illimitable future.

SECTION XII.

CHAPTER VI. 9, 10, 11.

THE FIFTH SEAL.

AND when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who were slain on account of the word of God, and on account of the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice saying, Until when, O Lord the holy and true, dost thou not judge and vindicate our blood from those who dwell on the earth ? And there was given to each one of them a white robe, and it was said to them that they should rest yet a short time, until their fellow-servants and their brethren, who were about to be killed also as they, were completed.

Some interpreters, as Mr. Daubuz and Vitranga, regard the altar as introduced in order to exhibit the martyrs as sacrifices offered to God. That construction, however, is embarrassed by insuperable objections. The brazen altar was an altar of expiation only. The animals offered on it were types of the sacrifice of Christ, and he offered himself only in atonement for sin. What resemblance then subsists between his offering, and the

slaughter of the martyrs? Their death was not expiatory, nor vicarious. We are excluded therefore by the nature of his sacrifice, from the supposition of any analogy between their death and his. Nor can the altar have been introduced for the mere purpose of indicating that the martyrs, like sacrificial victims, were put to a bloody death. No need existed of such an exhibition. Nor was there any analogy between their slaughter and that of animals sacrificed, which the altar could properly denote. The reasons of their being slain were wholly different, and its relations to right. Those sacrifices were offered by divine command; it was in transgression of the law of God that the martyrs were slain. It was no infringement of the rights of the animals sacrificed, to subject them to that death. The persecution and slaughter of the martyrs, were in violation of their most sacred rights. It is undoubtedly in some wholly different relation therefore that the altar is to be contemplated. As their cheerful submission to death for the sake of Christ was a beautiful act of obedience, it resembled far more an offering of incense on the golden altar, in expression of love, gratitude, and homage, than an expiatory sacrifice. And if the altar were introduced in order to exhibit their death as an offering, it was doubtless the altar of incense and as a symbol of homage. But that construction is likewise ineligible. That they died as martyrs, implies that they died cheerfully for the sake of Christ rather than to apostatize, not of mere constraint, and needed not therefore a formal symbolization. Whether the altar then were the altar of incense, or the altar of expiation, it doubtless was introduced, not to exhibit them as sacrifices or as offerings, but only as a symbol of the instrument on which the expiation had been made which was the ground of their trust, as it was on that that the fire of God's justice had burned, and on the cross which it typified that his rights had been vindicated, and his truth and rectitude maintained; and its object accordingly was to exhibit them, not as martyrs, but simply as believers in Christ, relying on his sacrifice for justification. Their station under it, or at its foot, denotes accordingly their reliance on the expiation made on the cross, and appeal on the ground of it to the faithfulness of Christ to fulfil the promises of a speedy advent to take possession of the earth, redeem his people from the power of his usurping enemies, and crown them with the full redemption which is to mark his millennial reign. This is in accordance with their cry, which implies an expectation founded on a promise, that he would interpose and destroy those who were slaughtering his

people, that a long period of persecution had intervened since the utterance of that promise, and that his truth and righteousness were intimately concerned in its fulfilment. Their cry sprang not therefore from impatience under sufferings, nor resentment against their persecutors, but from a regard to the word and glory of the Redeemer, whose victory cannot be completed till antichrist is overthrown, and the earth restored to the dominion of righteousness. In this relation the symbol has a natural, a clear, and a sublime significance. The affections exhibited by the martyrs are becoming them, and honorable to the Saviour.

Unlike the agents denoted by the symbols of the preceding seals, the martyr souls are exhibited in their own persons; and obviously because no others could serve as their symbol; there being no others that have undergone a change from a bodied to a disembodied life, nor that sustain such relations to God of forgiveness, acceptance, and assurance of a resurrection from death, and a priesthood with Christ during his victorious reign on the earth. They act accordingly in their own persons, not as representatives of another class of beings, or of surviving or subsequent believers on the earth.

They were the souls of the martyrs that were shown in the vision, not their dead bodies, as Mr. Mede and some others have supposed, as is manifest from the term itself, the representation, the scene of their appearance, and their cry. The term *τὰ πτώματα* is used in the prophecy to denote the dead bodies of the martyrs, chap. xi. 9, and *αἱ ψυχαί*, xx. 4, to denote their disembodied spirits. They are represented as having been slain, and as uttering their appeal to God because of their blood having been shed. But it were incongruous to exhibit dead bodies as conscious, and exerting the actions of life. It were in contradiction to truth. Such a symbolization would represent them indeed, not as continuing under the power of death, but raised to a new life. And finally the place of their appearance was not that of their martyrdom on the earth, but at the altar before the throne in the scene of the vision in heaven, whither their souls passed immediately after death, but whither it were incongruous to exhibit their bodies as conveyed.

The period of their utterance of the cry, was that intervening immediately between death and their public acceptance, in token of which white robes were given them; and not improbably the wonder at the delay of the promise which it expressed, was not that alone which they may have felt when subjected to the stroke

of death, but in a far higher degree a surprise and awe excited on the one hand by the vision of the incarnate Deity, and loftier sense to which they were raised by it of the sanctity of his rights, his infinite power to accomplish his purposes, and the wonderfulness of his forbearance toward his foes ; and on the other by the beauty of their new existence, the greatness of his love to his people, and the glory of the salvation to which he exalts them. With these was intermixed not improbably a feeling of pity and love for those whom they had left exposed to the sufferings and dangers of persecution, and desire that their families and friends might by the speedy advent of Christ be freed from those trials, and given to share in the infinite gifts of his millennial reign.

The form in which they uttered their surprise at his delay is eminently beautiful, becoming beings approaching for the first time his visible presence, meeting his smile, beholding the dazzling grandeurs of his majesty, and raised to a raptured realization of the splendors of the existence to which he exalts his redeemed ;—a burst of wonder alike at his love to his people, and at his forbearance toward his foes, fraught with an acknowledgment of his sovereignty, his infinite sanctitude and truth, and trust in his promise of a speedy redemption of the earth from the dominion of his enemies. It exhibits them as entering his presence with a profound interest in his glory, a fervent desire to understand his ways, confidence in his rectitude, and a sense that the new and immortal career on which they had entered, is pre-eminently to owe its beauty and blessedness to the accomplishment of the great purpose which he has revealed, of a conquest of his foes, and a victorious reign on the earth.

The gift of a white robe to each one of them, denotes that they were formally accepted, and adjudged to the inheritance of life ; a white robe being the symbol of justification. The response to their appeal, that they should rest yet for a short time till their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed also as they, were completed, indicates that they were in expectation of a great and blissful change in Christ's administration over the world, when he should descend to vindicate their blood ; that that change was to take place as soon as the number of the martyrs was completed, and that the period to intervene was but short. It is an indubitable announcement therefore that the last period of antichrist is to be one of persecution. That great change, it is subsequently shown, is the extinction of the idolatrous and persecuting powers, the banishment of Satan to the abyss, the resurrection of the saints and reign with Christ on the

earth, the sanctification universally of the nations, and conversion of the world into a paradise of righteousness and peace. The answer thus clearly shows that it was in reference to these great events that they uttered their wonder at his delay.

As the action of the martyr spirits was in heaven, not on earth, and was simply expressive of their own feelings on entering the divine presence, not representative of the future actions of others, it contains no note either of the commencement or close of the period to which it belongs. The whole representation, however, indicates that it is late in the reign of antichrist. Their cry implies that a longer period of persecution than they had anticipated, had already passed, and the answer that the time still to elapse before the advent of Christ, was to be short in comparison. Its period is doubtless, therefore, during the ravages of the fourth horseman, and the action of the wild beasts of the earth in the relations exhibited in that symbol, of subsidiaries to the apostate archpriests of the church, and towards its close. Near the termination of the twelve hundred and sixty years, the relations of the great sorceress to the civil governments were to be essentially reversed. She was to fall from her supremacy, to be hated, torn, and devoured by those whom she had seduced, and to sink into the condition of an equal and a tool. Though she is to subsist to the last, yet it is the ten-horned wild beast that is to slaughter the witnesses, and make the last war on the saints; and the unclean spirits that are to gather the kings together at the battle of the great day of God Almighty, are to go out of the mouth of the wild beast and the dragon, as well as the false prophet. It is to spring in a large degree from political motives, and the apostate rulers of the church are to act in it but the part of subordinates. The period of the martyrs was probably, therefore, towards the close of the Reformation, and ended with that struggle.

The revelation made under this seal, is eminently adapted to yield support to the people of God under the trials of persecution. While it forewarns them indirectly that those trials were to continue through a long tract of ages, it teaches that the martyrs immediately ascend to the presence of Christ, receive justification, and enter on a happy and glorious life. It shows that they rise to the loftiest interest in the ways and purposes of the Redeemer, and look forward with the most fervid desire to his advent and their resurrection and participation in the grandeur of his victorious reign on the earth. It assures them that however incomprehensible and dark his providences appear here, they are filled on their admis-

sion to his presence with the loftiest sense of his dominion, rectitude, and truth, and find the most ample reason for acquiescence in his will. It forewarns them that the period immediately before the final destruction of the wild beast and false prophet, is to be marked by a bloody persecution, and that the completion of the number of the martyrs is to be the signal of the Redeemer's advent.

The different views which commentators have given of the passage, present nothing to impair this exposition. Grotius represents the martyrs as those who were first slain in Judea—Stephen, James, and others. But that is to represent their martyrdom as anterior to the earliest date assigned to the visions. The death of Stephen is referred to the year 34,¹ of James to 44.² The date assigned by Grotius to the banishment of the apostle to Patmos, is the reign of Claudius, who, according to Pagi,³ died in A. D. 54; not only, however, without the least probability, as history furnishes no hint of a persecution under that emperor, but against the reference of the Revelation by the earliest writers to the close of the reign of Domitian, whose death took place in A. D. 95 or 96.⁴ The death of Stephen, therefore, preceded the accession of Claudius several years. The death of James took place in the third year of his reign, and must have preceded the vision likewise, unless it were of an earlier date than any have hitherto been willing to assign. It is inconsistent with the intimation by the martyrs that a long period of persecution had already passed, and shown to be wholly erroneous by the vast tract of ages, during which the frequent slaughter of the witnesses of God continued. At the period when Grotius wrote his comment, it had raged for centuries with scarce an intermission, and continued on a vast scale a hundred years later. Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, Rosenmuller, and Mr. Stuart likewise exhibit the martyrs as those slain by the Jews.

Mr. Mede, Dr. Cressner, Dr. More, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Lowman, Mr. Whiston, Bishop Newton, Mr. Faber, Mr. Elliott, regard the martyrs as those chiefly who were slain in the persecution by Diocletian. But that is scarcely less inconsistent with the assurance, that but a short time should intervene before the number of the martyrs should be completed. Thirteen centuries followed of persecution, almost without intermission; a period in no sense short, but wholly incapable of that

¹ Baronii annales, anno 34, no. 300 no. 301.

² Pagi Crit. in annales Baron. anno 54, no. 2.

⁴ Eusebii Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 23, lib. v. c. 8.

³ Ibid. anno 44, no. 2.

designation in comparison of the season of persecution that preceded it.

Mr. Brightman refers the slaughter of the martyrs to the persecutions from Trajan to Gallienus, and regards the white robes and short rest, as denoting the quiet and prosperity of the church on earth from that period to the persecution by Diocletian. Mr Cuninghame also, while he refers their slaughter to the persecutions by the papal hierarchy, regards them in their acceptance and rest, as probably symbolizing the church on earth. But that is in contradiction to the law of symbolization itself, and to the agency ascribed to the martyr spirits. There is no analogy between the condition of disembodied souls, and believers on earth; between those who have ascended to heaven, obtained justification, and entered into rest, and those who are yet offending and repenting, struggling amidst the storms of trial, and exposed to persecution and death, that can make the one a proper representative of the other. The actions of the martyr spirits are equally incapable of ascription to the church here. What act of believers on earth, can their representation that their blood has been shed, denote; or their reception of a robe, and entrance on a rest? Nothing of an analogous nature takes place in their condition here. Their life is a warfare to its close. Besides, to exhibit them in this part of the representation as sustaining the relation of a symbol to the church on earth, is to exhibit the Redeemer also in his address to them and gift of a robe, as symbolizing the authors or instruments of that condition or agency of the church which they are supposed to denote, which is wholly unauthorized and against analogy.

Vitringa's exposition, who regarded their justification in heaven as symbolizing their justification by the church on earth, is obnoxious to the same objection. No instance appears in the Apocalypse, in which there is the slightest indication that the Redeemer acts as a symbol of any other being. There is no analogy between his deity, his deity and his manhood united, or his station, and that of any order of creatures. It is inconsistent with his dignity and office that he should serve as a symbol of other agents, and especially of such as are imperfect like believers on earth. He accordingly, whenever introduced, appears in his own person, and acts only as his own representative. Most interpreters seem to regard it as the principal design of the symbol to fore-show a persecution of the saints. But though it makes that important revelation, it is not to contemplate it in its proper relations to regard that as its chief aim, as it is taught indirectly only.

The agents of the scene represented as introduced into the presence of Christ by a persecution, are employed in teaching other truths adapted to console and sustain the church in its trials

SECTION XIII.

CHAPTER VI. 12-17.

THE SIXTH SEAL.

AND I looked when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. And the sun became black as hair sackcloth, and the whole moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig-tree shaken by a great wind casts her unripe figs. And heaven was removed like a scroll uprolled, and every mountain and island were moved from their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the commanders of thousands, and the rich, and the mighty, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath has come, and who is able to stand?

The symbolic agents of the preceding seals were living beings, and exhibited as actors exerting influences on others, or expressing their own thoughts and feelings. The chief of these are unconscious objects, and exhibited not as exertors, but as the subjects of influences. The law of symbolization requires us to regard them, not as representing themselves, but some analogous class of existences. It is inconsistent with the aim of the prophecy, to assume that they were introduced for the purpose of foreshowing that they are themselves to be the subjects of such events. The object of the revelation is to foreshow agencies which intelligent creatures are to exert, and the dispensations of God towards them, not mere phenomena of the material world; and all the symbols accordingly that are exhibited either as the authors or the subjects of actions, are representatives in some relation of intelligent beings.

Where, then, in the great circle of society in the apocalyptic earth, are there individuals or bodies of men, that exhibit in their relations to the population at large, a conspicuous resemblance

to the relations of the sun, moon, and stars to the earth? Civil rulers are obviously such, and they alone. Monarchs, princes, nobles, great officers of state, legislators, are in the political world, what those luminaries are in the physical. They are together the central and controlling power, the source of law and opinion. They send their influence through every department of society, and determine the conditions and forms of life. On the other hand, the population at large, with its subordinate organizations, is to those rulers what the earth with its natural diversities of surface, productions, and artificial structures, is to the sun, moon, and stars. What events then are there in such a political world analogous to a great earthquake, the conversion of the sun into black, and the moon into crimson, the fall of the stars, the disappearance of the heavens, and the removal from their places of mountains and islands? Violent political agitations and revolutions obviously present such a correspondence to the first; the misuse by rulers of their power in the oppression of their subjects, to the second; their fall from their stations, to the third; and the annihilation of governments themselves, and obliteration of political distinctions, to the fourth. In a great earthquake the surface of the ground through a wide region is violently agitated; the hills, vales, rocks, forests, trees, are thrown into new attitudes; the works of art dashed down; pestiferous gases emitted from fissures and caverns, and the growth intercepted of the fruits and crops. So in violent political commotions and revolutions, the members of the community are thrown into new relations, new combinations generated, new and dangerous principles and passions evolved, and an air of disorder, insecurity, and violence impressed on the whole aspect of society. To convert the sun into black, and the moon into blood, were to reverse their nature and influences, render them objects of horror, and make them sources of mischief, instead of light, warmth, and life. In like manner, when civil rulers become lawless oppressors, they lose their proper character as vindicators of right, guardians of safety, and fosterers of happiness, and become terrific agents of destruction. There is a similar analogy between the fall of stars and the dejection of rulers from their station; and between the withdrawal of the heavens, and the removal of mountains and islands from their places, and the annihilation of governments and obliteration of all political distinctions.

The symbols of this seal represent then a succession of violent and disastrous changes in the political world, which are at length to end in the dissolution of all forms of civil government. The

first in the series denoted by the earthquake, is a violent commotion of the subjects of government, by which they are thrown out of their former position into new relations,—the erect stretched prostrate, the conspicuous dashed into obscurity, the obscure raised to dignity and influence, and confusion, disarray, and violence spread through every scene. The next, denoted by the conversion of the sun into black, and the moon into blood, is a change of the civil rulers themselves thus suddenly raised to power, from the beneficent influence which it is their proper office to exert in maintaining right, preserving peace, disseminating knowledge, and exciting a healthful action in all the departments of society, to oppression, a lawless violation of the rights, devastation of the property, and destruction of the happiness of their subjects; such as usually springs out of the ebullitions of democracy. Then follows the precipitation of these oppressors from their stations to a level with the multitude, symbolized by the fall of stars to the earth like the dejection of unripe figs from a tree shaken and swayed to and fro by a violent wind: next, a total dissolution of government and obliteration of all political distinctions, indicated by the passing away of the heavens and the movement of the mountains and islands from their places: and lastly, a consummation of the catastrophe by the visible advent of the Redeemer to judge his enemies, and accept his people, shown by the consternation of the kings and their subjects, their retreat from the splendors of his presence to dens and caves, and cry to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from his wrath:—exhibiting his presence and the arrival of the great day of his vengeance, as the cause of their terror, and indicating an entire termination of their conflicts with each other, and dissolution of all political relations. To ascribe any lower meaning to the passage, is to disregard its most conspicuous characters. To suppose the presence of the Lamb, and the great day of his wrath, are mere representatives of another and inferior presence and epoch, is to contradict the law of symbolization requiring a resemblance of the sign to the thing signified. No such analogy subsists between the Deity and creatures, that he can properly be made their symbol. They are at the greatest possible distance from each other. It were wholly inconsistent with the nature and station of the omnipotent Judge of all, to make him descending to execute vengeance on his enemies, a representative of those enemies themselves inflicting evils on one another; the infinitely Upright the symbol of the wicked,—Christ of Antichrist. It is to disregard the representation that

his presence and the arrival of the day of his wrath, are the cause of the consternation of the rulers and people, and endeavor to hide themselves in the caverns and rocks, and convert it indeed into a solecism. From whom are they to fly, if not from him? Not from one another, as their flight is to be promiscuous and universal. It is indisputably certain therefore that the great catastrophe denoted by the symbol, is to be consummated by the visible advent of the Son of God to destroy his foes, take possession of the earth, and commence his millennial reign; and this is in accordance with the resembling symbol of the seventh trumpet which is immediately to precede that advent, and with the Saviour's prediction, Matt. xxiv. 29, that his coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, is to follow a darkening of the sun and moon, and fall of the stars.

The events denoted by the symbol are such as must naturally occupy a long period. A political convulsion subverting one form of government and instituting another, is itself the work of years. The change of the sun to black and the moon to blood, denote not their extinction or disappearance, but their conversion from an agreeable and salutary, to a dreaded and disastrous agency; and the change of the new rulers, which it denotes, from justice to oppression, and exercise of a tyrannical sway, requires a considerable period. It is subsequently that the fall of the stars takes place, by which their dejection from their stations is symbolized. And the final disappearance of the heavens, the removal of the mountains and islands, and the promiscuous flight of rulers and subjects from the presence of the Lamb, are to follow at a still later period.

The first three of these great events have undoubtedly already taken place, and are the same as those denoted by the symbols of the first, fourth, and fifth vials; the first being the revolution in France, extending from the commencement of that political agitation to the fall of the ancient government; the second, the conversion of the new rule to a despotism, and exercise, through a succession of years, of a violent tyranny; the third, the overthrow of that oppressive dynasty, at the fall of Bonaparte, in 1815. Betwixt that fall and the final subversion of the governments of the earth, denoted by the passing away of the heavens, a period intervenes, during which the sealing symbolized in the next vision is to take place. These symbolizations correspond in all respects with those events; and those events with the symbolizations of those vials. These are to be followed by the assumption by the servants of God, of a new relation towards

the antichristian rulers, denoted by their being sealed, as those are by a new testimony of the witnesses to the rights and prerogatives of God, in opposition to the usurpations of the wild beast and false prophet. The sealing is to be followed by the annihilation of the civil governments, the advent of the Son of God, and a resurrection of the saints: as the testimony and slaughter of the witnesses are by the seventh trumpet, a political agitation, the advent of Christ, the destruction of the wild beast, and the resurrection of the holy dead.

The differing views which expositors have given of these symbols are arbitrary and inconsistent with analogy. Grotius regarded them as representing similar physical events, that were to presage the war between the Jews and the Romans under Nero and Vespasian, and refers the discoloration of the sun and the moon to eclipses of those bodies during the reign of Claudius. But that is to disregard the law of symbolization, and make the sign and the thing signified of the same species.

Dr. Hammond ascribes that signification likewise to the earthquake and the darkening of the sun and moon, and to the latter the additional office also of indicating slaughter, which is against analogy, and destructive of all certainty of meaning. If symbols may in that manner denote two different and wholly dissimilar events, of one of which the physical world is the subject, of the other the intelligent, why may they not represent any other number and variety? Who can determine the limit or nature of their import? The fall of the stars and the other phenomena, he regards as symbolizing the defeat of the Jewish leaders, the capture of Jerusalem, and dispersion of the nation by Titus, which are also without analogy. The Jews were not independent, and had no supreme powers sustaining a relation to their nation answering to that of the sun, moon, and stars to the earth. Their city had been captured, moreover, several years before the period of the visions, and cannot for that reason be the event denoted by these symbols.

Mr. Brightman interpreted them of the persecution by Diocletian; regarding the sun as representing the Scriptures, the moon piety, the stars the ministers of the church, the heavens the church itself, and alleging the burning of the Scriptures, the obstruction of piety, and the apostasy of ministers and private Christians, as the events foreshown. But no such correspondence as symbolization requires, subsists between these objects and the sun, moon, and stars; nor between these events and the phenomena ascribed to the heavenly bodies. The relations

of the Scriptures to the church, are not like those of the sun to the heavens, but rather like its relations to the earth. The burning of copies of the Scriptures forms no parallel with the discoloration of the sun. Its blackness was not an eclipse or an extinction, but a change of nature. The destruction of copies of the sacred word, wrought no change in the nature of the revelation of which it is the record. The apostasies of teachers and private Christians, though numerous, were not universal. So far from it, the ill-success of the attempt to eradicate Christianity, and a public sympathy for the sufferers and abhorrence of the injustice to which they were subjected, were, in an important degree, the reasons of the discontinuance of the persecution and the revolution that almost immediately followed, under Constantine, in favor of the church.¹ Nor do the mere heavens exhibit any analogy to the church,—mere vacant and limitless space to a community of worshippers. No species of actions can be ascribed to space. It has nothing that is capable of phenomena. The departure of the heavens, was the disappearance of its luminaries, clouds, and whatever was perceptible by the eye, not the annihilation or removal of its space. If those luminaries therefore denoted the Scriptures, piety, and the ministers of the church, their disappearance must symbolize the disappearance of those ministers, the word of God, and religion, not the apostasy of a part of the church to idolatry.

Mr. Mede, Dr. Cressner, Dr. More, Mr. Whiston, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Lowman, Bishop Newton, Mr. Elliott, interpret the symbols of the defeat and extermination by Constantine of his antagonists, Maximian, Maxentius, and Licinius, who were idolaters, and the change of the religion of the state from paganism to Christianity. Mr. Faber expounds it wholly of that religious revolution. But that construction is open to equal objection. First: It is founded on the assumption that their expositions of the former seals are correct, which have been shown to be erroneous. Secondly: The only change of significance wrought by Constantine was the change of religion,—the public recognition and legalization of Christianity, and the partial discountenance and overthrow of paganism. His victories and the defeats of his antagonists were of moment, only as they were subsidiary to that. But the symbol denotes none but disastrous events. It indicates nothing that can be considered as answering to the extrication of the church from persecution. It is to be wholly con-

¹ Lactantii Inst. lib. v. c. 22, p. 491.

strued according to them, therefore, of the fall of paganism, and as representing thence but half of the change, and that the least significant. Thirdly : But no parallel subsists between the symbolic objects and paganism ; nor between the phenomena ascribed to them and the changes wrought in the relations of paganism to the state. Paganism was not to the state what the heavenly luminaries are to the earth. It was not the ruling power of the empire, but its creature and subsidiary, owing its establishment to law, the appointment of its chief priests and the prescription of its rites to the senate, and sustaining to the government no other relation than that of a political engine. Paganism, moreover, is a mere mode of agency, a species of views, affections, and actions ; not an agent. The sun, moon, and stars, therefore, cannot serve as its symbol, no analogy subsisting between them. Those heavenly bodies are real existences, exerting vast influences on the physical world. Their counterpart must also be, not a mere agency, but agents, or a combination of agents, exerting important influences on the social world. Nor were the pontifex maximus and inferior priests to the state what the sun, moon, and stars are to the earth, but the mere creatures and subsidiaries of the civil government. If the several orders of pagan priests could be considered as a counterpart to the sun, moon, and stars, yet they sustained no relation to the empire analogous to that of those luminaries to the earth. They were not the only religious teachers, nor the most influential, nor the true. So far from it, the motives which prompted Constantine to favor Christianity appear to have been drawn on the one hand from the great numbers and important influences of the Christian teachers and their disciples ; and on the other, from a general disgust of the better classes at the cruelties of persecution, and wish for toleration and safety to their friends and associates. Fourthly : But there is no correspondence between the changes wrought by Constantine in the relations of paganism to the state, and the phenomena ascribed to the heavenly bodies. The discoloration of the sun was a change of its nature, not a mere interception of its light. It became black as hair-sackcloth, and was visible therefore, not withdrawn from the eye by eclipse. The moon was visible also at the same time, and not therefore in opposition, and thence not in eclipse. But no such total and portentous change took place in the nature of paganism. It had no light whatever to lose. It could not be made blacker to the eye, or a greater object of horror to the heart. Fifthly : The whole change wrought by Constantine in the religion of the state, was limited

on the one hand to the legalization of Christianity,¹ and to the suppression of some of the most offensive rites and a general discouragement of paganism on the other.² It did not extend to an overthrow of paganism. Idolatry not only continued to be tolerated, but he himself held the station of *pontifex maximus* through his whole reign, as did his successors to Gratian.³ The subordinate priests still exercised their office. Many of their rites were still celebrated, and their temples frequented. Constantine continued to use the arts of divination. His images still received an idolatrous homage from the soldiers and citizens, and at death his deification was decreed by the senate.⁴ It was not till the reign of Theodosius that paganism was legally discarded and Christianity formally adopted as the religion of the state.⁵ Finally : The influence on the votaries of idolatry of the change introduced by Constantine, exhibits no resemblance to the terror and flight of the kings and their subjects, who as Christ appears in that scene, are also to be regarded as representing themselves. Those votaries were disappointed, chagrined, and inflamed with resentment and malice, but history presents not the faintest hint that they deemed they beheld the Lamb of God enthroned in the heavens ; nor that, impressed with an apprehension of his approach to inflict on his enemies the vengeance threatened in his word, they fled promiscuously to the mountains and called on the rocks and the hills to cover them from his face ; nor is the supposition admissible, as it would imply that though idolaters they were yet believers in the deity of Christ and the predictions of his word. The changes wrought by Constantine exhibit no resemblances then whatever to the representations of the symbol.

Vitringa's exposition so far coincides with that which I have given, that he exhibits the symbols as foreshowing the overthrow of the antichristian civil powers of the western Roman empire. He differs, however, in interpreting the moon and stars of the pope and superior prelates of the idolatrous church, and deems the catastrophe will be wrought by ordinary causes, and without a visible interposition of the Redeemer. That the apostate hierarchies must be dashed from their stations on the fall of the governments by which they are upheld, is indeed manifest ; and that they are in some degree to perish together, is shown in the description of the great battle of God Almighty, when the false

¹ Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. ii. c. 42, 56.

² Ibid. lib. ii. c. 44, lib. iv. c. 23, 25.

³ Zosimi Hist. lib. iv. c. 36.

⁴ Gibbon's Hist. chap. xx. and xxi.

⁵ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. x. l. 12. 4.

prophet is to be taken with the wild beast and cast into the lake of fire. But that that body of false teachers or their chief is denoted by any of these symbols, is neither certain nor probable. Their office is to show the relations of the powers that are to be overthrown to the social world, rather than to one another. The relations, moreover, to a civil government of an apostate and subsidiary hierarchy, are not like those of the moon to the sun. Such a hierarchy may owe its support, its exclusive permission to teach, and its power to persecute, to the civil government; but its apostate doctrines, unlike the light of the moon, originate with itself. The great sorceress of Babylon is moreover to fall from that relation to the civil government, which is symbolized by her station on the wild beast, anterior to the catastrophe of the beast itself, and is to act the part in the last struggle, not of a ruling, but a subordinate power. And finally, that a visible advent of the Son of God is to consummate the catastrophe, is not only shown by the consternation and cry of the kings and their subjects, but also by the symbols of the nineteenth chapter, which denote his personal coming at the destruction of the wild beast and false prophet.

Cocceius interprets the earthquake of the wars of the emperor Frederick II. against the German princes, and others of France and Spain in the sixteenth century; the obscuration of the sun, of the false teachings of the pope; the fall of the stars, of the dejection of Roman Catholic bishops from their sees in Germany, England, Scotland, and Ireland; and the removal of the heavens, of the abolition of the Catholic hierarchies. But an earthquake is the symbol of a political revolution, not of a mere war between princes and nations. The sun is the symbol of the supreme civil rulers of an empire, not of a pontiff; the removal of the heavens accordingly denotes the annihilation of the government in which the sun represents the chief, and the moon and stars the subordinate rulers. And finally, those contests did not result, as is foreshown of the agitations denoted by the symbols of this seal, in the total abolition of the governments of those nations.

Dean Woodhouse interprets the symbols of a great day of vengeance at the end of the world; Mr. Cuninghame of the same period as the seventh trumpet, and regards the events foreshown as having commenced with the French revolution, and to be consummated by a visible advent of the Son of God.

SECTION XIV.

CHAPTER VII. 1-8.

THE SEALING OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD.

AND after these, I saw four angels stationed at the four corners of the earth, having power over the four winds of the earth, that wind should neither blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to injure the earth and the sea, saying, Ye may not injure the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until we can seal the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of the sealed, a hundred forty-four thousand were sealed of the whole race of the sons of Israel. Of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Asser twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Zebulon twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed, of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

The four winds denote all the winds, and the four angels all the powers that excite and direct their violence, manifestly from the representation that they have power over them that wind should not blow on the land, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. They are obviously tempestuous winds, which when excited are to sweep land and sea, and spread them with desolation. The peculiar office of the angels is, not to restrain them, but to rouse and direct their violence; not to make them salutary, but the instruments of universal devastation. The restraint from injuring with them till the servants of God can be sealed, is a restraint accordingly from entering on their official work till that sealing can be accomplished.

What then are these symbolic winds? What is there that sweeps over the great surface of the social and political world with an irresistible and mischievous power, analogous to whirlwinds driving in every direction over land and sea, stripping the trees of leaves and boughs, and whirling them into the air, prostrating

dwellings, wrenching the sturdy forests from their seats, and strewing the earth with ruin and the ocean with wrecks? Combinations and masses of men under the influence of new and exciting opinions; multitudes and nations roused to passion and uniting in a violent demolition of social and political institutions, and the destruction of those who obstruct their ambition, or repress their madness. Who are the angels that arouse these tempestuous blasts? The authors and propagators of those opinions; the fomentors and directors of the violences to which they excite. That they are not to enter on their work till the angel from the sunrising can seal the servants of God, implies that though the elements of devastation are already in existence, yet their being blown into a whirlwind is to be a consequence in some manner of that sealing. It is by that process that the religious and political atmosphere is to be brought into the requisite state for the generation of the destructive tempest. No delineation is given of the figure of the four angels, which is natural from the extreme distance of their station.

To seal the servants of God, is not to constitute them such, but to fix a mark on their brows by which they are conspicuously shown to be his. It is as his servants, not as his enemies that they are sealed, and the change wrought by their sealing is not in their character, but their aspect. The symbol denotes, therefore, that the servants of God, ere the whirlwind of ruin begins, are to be led to assume a new attitude towards the apostate church and usurping civil rulers, by which, and in a manner never before seen, they are to be shown to be indubitably his true people. What that relation is to be is not left to conjecture, but revealed in a subsequent vision, in which their characteristics are exhibited as the opposites of those that distinguish the apostate church. They are pure, not adulterers seduced by the harlot great Babylon to worship the wild beast, its image, or other creatures, which is the homage of apostates. They are followers of the Lamb wherever he may lead, not of the wild beast and false prophet. They are sincere, not hypocritical; and without spot, not like the worshippers of the beast, whose religion adds to their guilt. It is a public and formal dissent, therefore, from great Babylon the legalized hierarchies renunciation of the dominion over the people of God which the wild beast and false prophet have assumed, and testimony against it as an arrogation of authority over his laws. The angel who bears the seal represents those who excite and conduct this separation and testimony; and their agency, it is seen from other

parts of the prophecy, is to precede the slaughter of the witnesses and the fall of great Babylon.

The tribes denote the denominations of the church. As the twelve were all the divisions of the Israelitish family, they represent all the branches of the Christian profession that contain true servants of God. This movement, therefore, is not to be confined to one denomination, but to extend to all churches, either nationalized, or existing in the territories of the wild beast, that contain true worshippers. The precision of the number denotes a limitation probably, rather than a universality of the sealing; that a part only, not that all the servants of God are to share in this movement. This is indicated by the summons of his people to come out of great Babylon, the nationalized hierarchies, after the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses and her fall, chap. xi. 13, xviii. 1-4. The sealed and the witnesses are undoubtedly the same.

The questions between the true and the apostate church, between God's exclusive authority over the faith and worship of his people, and the impious claims of the wild beast and usurping hierarchies, are to be so thoroughly discussed and placed in so clear a light, that a vast body of the true believers will understand and appreciate them, feel summoned as by a voice from heaven to withdraw from all relations to those antichristian powers, the continuance of which would imply a sanction of their usurpations, and to assert and vindicate the rights of God against them. Those also who still remain associated with them are after the resurrection of the witnesses and the fall of the nationalized hierarchies, to be again summoned to renounce their communion, as will appear in the exposition of subsequent visions.

To rise to the relation and fulfil the office to which the sealed are thus to be called, will be to take an attitude both towards God, and towards the wild beast, its image, and the nationalized church, which no body of believers has ever yet assumed. The great and palpable fact that to nationalize a church and dictate its faith and worship, is not only to usurp the prerogatives of God, but to assert a dominion over his rights and laws, has never been discerned and proclaimed, either by the pure worshippers as a body, or even by individuals. The ground on which religious toleration has been urged in the discussions that have agitated the church for three hundred years, has been that compulsion is a violation of the rights of conscience; not that it is an arrogation of dominion over the prerogatives and legislation of the Almighty. Yet such it indisputably is. When civil rulers

nationalize a church, they assume the right of determining what the faith and homage of their subjects shall be. They appoint a creed; they enjoin a worship; they prohibit all others. They offer their will as a reason why that creed should be held and that worship offered; they treat a dissent as a violation of their rights, and punish it as a crime. They thence clearly assume that the laws which God imposes on their subjects are under their dominion. Their procedure implies and arrogates a jurisdiction over the duties their subjects owe to him, and thence over his right to their obedience and homage. When, therefore, they demand and compel submission to this usurped authority over his laws, they enjoin and compel a homage to themselves that is due only to him. This is the relation accordingly in which their usurpation is exhibited in this prophecy. They who approve and support their legislation over the doctrines and laws of the gospel, are represented as worshippers of the wild beast; and they who assent to a similar usurpation by papal ecclesiastics, are exhibited as worshippers of the image of the wild beast. And that is manifestly the import of those acts. If civil and ecclesiastical rulers have no jurisdiction over the legislation of God, why do they attempt to re-enjoin his religious laws on their subjects on their own authority, and punish a non-submission to their dictation as a violation of their rights? If it be not their prerogative to determine what the duties are which their subjects owe to God, why do they interfere between him and them, and attempt the determination of those duties? If it be the prerogative of the Almighty alone to assert and maintain his rights by legislation, why do they arrogate that office as being equally theirs? And why, unless they are regarded as truly possessing the powers which they thus arrogate, are their assumptions approved and vindicated by their subjects? Nothing can be clearer, then, than that when they appoint a creed and enjoin a worship on their subjects, they arrogate a dominion over his laws and rights, and treat him as subordinate to themselves. If they appoint the same faith and worship which he has enjoined, they still treat them as subject to their authority. If they enjoin a different system of doctrines and rites, they assume the power of rescinding his laws and superseding them by their own. And such would be instantly seen and felt by every civil and ecclesiastical ruler to be the import of a similar agency of a foreign ruler towards them. Were the emperor of Russia to issue an edict enjoining the laws enacted by the British legislature on the subjects of the British empire, enforce them by new sanctions, treat

a violation of them as an infringement of his rights, and attempt to punish it as a crime, it would be interpreted by the monarch and legislators of Great Britain as an arrogation of supreme dominion over that empire, and implying that the obligations of its population to them are subordinate to their obligations to him.

To nationalize a church therefore, is to offer the most flagrant violation to the rights and insult to the majesty of God ; and to assent to such a nationalization, is to sanction that violation, and pay a homage to usurping creatures that is due only to him. And to perceive and appreciate this truth, to discern and honor the rights of God in their greatness and sanctity, publicly and appropriately to assert and vindicate them, in opposition to the usurpations of civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and withdraw from connection with churches acknowledging their usurped jurisdiction, will be to rise to an attitude towards God and civil and ecclesiastical rulers which his servants have never yet assumed, and fulfil an office they have never yet discharged. The great advocates hitherto of toleration have placed their objections to compulsion and persecution on no such ground. Bishop Taylor, in his voluminous work on the subject, lavished the treasures of his learning and the subtleties of his genius in an endeavor to maintain on the one hand the divine right of kings, and the obligation on the other of subjects to non-resistance and passive obedience, justified and applauded the assumption by civil and ecclesiastical rulers of jurisdiction over their faith and worship, and cited even the arrogation by the heathen emperors of that dominion, as authority for a similar usurpation by Christian princes. He regarded the right as belonging naturally and necessarily to monarchs and bishops, ascribed to their exercise of it an absolute and divine authority, and exhibited it as under no restriction whatever in regard to the subject, and none in respect to God, except that no doctrine or worship was to be imposed but such as he has enjoined. His principles accordingly yield no liberty whatever of dissent to the subject. It is only by surrendering them that he grants that obedience may be withheld from the law of the creature, when it is seen to be at war with that of the creator. His pleas for toleration in reality therefore, if interpreted by his doctrine, are nothing more than reasons that rulers should impose no faith and worship on their subjects, but such as God enjoins. If not so interpreted, and they are undoubtedly incapable of that construction, except by the rejection of all their significance, then his theories of the powers of rulers and the rights of subjects are

wholly inconsistent with each other. Nor is it easy to believe that he was not aware of their inconsistency. Had it been his aim in his doctrine to justify the arrogations of Charles I. and Archbishop Laud, but in his reasonings against persecution, merely to embarrass the anti-prelatists who had risen to power and driven him from his station, and restrain them from retorting the cruelties which his own party had been accustomed to inflict, he would naturally have indulged in the self-contradiction which his discussions exhibit.

Mr. Locke's plea for toleration is founded chiefly on the ground that the magistrate's office has relation solely to civil affairs, that he transcends his powers therefore and encroaches on the rights of the subject, when he imposes a creed and a worship; not that he infringes the prerogatives and arrogates a dominion over the laws of the Almighty.

While Bishop Hoadly held that God is the only rightful law-giver of the church, and denied to magistrates and ecclesiastics authority to impose any other faith or rites than those which he has enjoined, he yet held that they may impose those, and approved accordingly and supported the English establishment, on the ground that its faith and worship are those which are appointed by God.

Bishop Warburton held that although the church is naturally independent of the state, it yet may voluntarily place itself under its jurisdiction, and that it is the right and policy of the state to give it a civil establishment. He accordingly approved and advocated its nationalization, and objected to intolerance and persecution, only on the ground that they are violations of the rights of conscience, and deemed they were justifiable when thought requisite to the safety of the state.

In like manner the objections of the English dissenters from the days of Elizabeth to the present time, have been directed, not against the principle of an establishment, but against the doctrines, rites, and ceremonies which the British legislature have imposed, and the violation by compulsion of the rights of conscience; and are generally extremely frivolous compared to the objection to the principle of nationalization itself. Thus Mr. Towgood, one of the ablest of their writers, argues not against nationalization, but only against the imposition of doctrines, rites, and ceremonies which are not authorized by the gospel, the violation of conscience, and other peculiarities of the establishment which he deemed unnecessary imperfections of nationalization. He approved of a civil establishment, and desired it to be ex-

tended to his own and other denominations ;¹ and such it is said is the desire at the present time of the English non-conformists generally.² The office to which the sealed are to be called, is one therefore which no body of believers has ever yet fulfilled.

Commentators, though varying widely in their expositions, universally assign a different meaning to this symbol. A large number interpret it as denoting the exemption of the true people of God from the calamities with which the tempest winds are to overwhelm his enemies. Thus Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, Rosenmuller, exhibit it as foreshowing the withdrawal of the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem and Judea to Pella or elsewhere, anterior to the ravage of the country and overthrow of the city by the Romans ; Vitringa interprets it of the preservation of the evangelical church of Europe, amidst the dangers of a religious war by the civil powers, which he regarded the tempest as foreshadowing ; Mr. Mede, Dr. Cressner, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Whiston, Bishop Newton, of the protection of the true church from the evils denoted by the symbols of the first trumpets chiefly ; Dean Woodhouse, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Bickersteth, of its preservation from the judgments by which at the seventh trumpet the antichristian powers are to be overthrown ; and allege as an important ground or confirmation of their construction, the ninth of Ezekiel. But that interpretation is not in harmony with the symbol. The office of a mark clearly is to distinguish, not to preserve ; to show to whom the person or object marked belongs, not what is to be its destiny. Nor is it in consistence with analogy to regard the mark as the means or occasion of preservation. It is not to be supposed that when the slaughter which the vision of Ezekiel symbolized took place, the slaughters were withheld from destroying the people of God by noticing a peculiar mark on their foreheads. The marking therefore denoted some analogous agency, anterior to the slaughter, by which they became conspicuously discriminated from the worshippers of idols. That they were to be exempted from the slaughter, was shown not by the mark, but by the direction subsequently given to the executioners not to approach them, and which implies that they were not to be still promiscuously intermixed with those who were to be slain. Had not that direction been added, who could have inferred with assurance that they were to be exempted from the sword, which was commissioned to destroy so many others ? Nor whether that vision foreshad-

¹ Towgood's Dissent. pp. 72, 140, 164.

² Essays on Christian Union. Essay vii.

owed the destruction of the apostate Jews by the Chaldeans, or the Romans, is it to be doubted that the true worshippers were led to refuse all concurrence in their apostasies, to testify in a public and emphatic manner their disapprobation of their rebellion, whether it were the worship of idols or the rejection of Christ, and maintain the attitude of faithful servants of God. It is incredible that during the ravage of Judea and siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, a single true worshipper should have refrained from expressing his abhorrence of the idolatry which drew that scourge on the nation, and notwithstanding the exhortations of the prophets, continued in such an attitude as to sanction the apostasy of the priests and rulers. It is incredible that under the example and teachings of the apostles and their disciples, and the extraordinary influences and gifts of the Holy Spirit, a single believer in Christ should have wholly abstained, as the Roman war approached, from the expression of his faith, and continued in such a relation to the unbelieving faction, as to countenance their rejection of the Messiah, and trust in deceivers and false Christs.

The sealing of the servants of God, in like manner, is not a symbol of their exemption from the blast of the tempest wind, but of a change in their relations to the antichristian powers anterior to that blast, by which they are to withdraw all sanction from the usurpations and apostasies of the wild beast and nationalized hierarchies, and own and honor Christ as alone the king and lawgiver of the church. So far from being exempted from the tempest, its excitement is to result in some manner from their being sealed, and its violence to be directed in an eminent degree against them.

Mr. Brightman and Mr. Daubuz regard Constantine the Great as the angel from the east, and interpret the sealing of his agency in freeing the church from the obstructions of persecution, establishing it in peace, and prompting it to a more discriminating and authoritative profession of the true faith. But in the first place, that construction is founded on the false assumption that their exposition of the seals, which refers them to events anterior to Constantine, is correct; and in the next, the change wrought by that monarch in the condition of the church, was wholly unlike that which the symbol denotes. The agency of the angel from the sunrising is limited to the servants of God. He affixes the seal on no others. But the public recognition by Constantine of the Christian religion as of divine origin, and allowance of all who chose to profess it, and worship according to its rites

without obstruction, which they allege as denoted by that agency, had no such limitation. The large influx of new professors which it occasioned, was not solely of true worshippers. Prompted by fashion, ambition of place, and not improbably by fear, as well as by an ingenuous faith, the crowds that suddenly turned from idolatry to the temples of Christ, were in a large degree worldly and hypocritical, whose accession therefore was an adulteration instead of an improvement of the church.¹ Nor was the agency of Constantine limited to the grant of toleration and encouragement of the servants of God to make an open profession of their faith. He attempted likewise to produce, through the canons of councils and his own edicts, a uniformity of belief, but without success. So far from producing unity, the church was agitated during his reign by diversities of opinion, and rent with contentions to a degree that had before been wholly unknown. Nor were the grounds legitimate on which he attempted to enforce that uniformity. He claimed the right to dictate to whom his subjects should pay their religious regards, and what homage they should offer; and was guilty therein of that usurpation of the rights of God which is the peculiar crime of the civil powers symbolized by the seven-headed dragon and the ten-horned wild beast. He is accordingly represented, as well as his successors, by the seventh head of that dragon. No error can be more consummate therefore than to imagine that he who thus usurped the prerogatives of the Almighty, and demanded a supreme homage of himself, was symbolized by the angel whose office it is to prompt the servants of God to renounce that homage of creatures, separate themselves from all idolaters and apostates, and own and honor God as the only legitimate object of worship, and the only rightful religious lawgiver. The symbolization of him with his successors as the seventh head of the dragon, was proper also obviously, as he continued not only to tolerate idolatry, but to sanction it in the homage of his own image; and, finally, he attempted to enforce submission to his claims of authority, by the persuasions of persecution, deprivation of office, banishment, confiscation, imprisonment, and death. No recitals of history are more incontrovertible than that his beneficial agency towards the church was limited to the grant of toleration. His public and lavish patronage, his assertion of authority over its faith and worship, his modifications of its government, and attempts to make it subservient to himself, were fruitful of mis-

¹ Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. iv. c. 54.

chief, and contributed largely to that corruption of doctrine, of worship, and of manners, which soon became its characteristic.

Mr. Lowman refers the vision likewise to the reign of Constantine, and interprets the sealing of large accessions to the church by baptism. But that exposition proceeds on the assumption that the events denoted by the first six seals were anterior to the reign of Constantine, which has been shown to be erroneous. It is wholly irreconcilable also with the relations and character of the sealed. They are already of the visible church denoted by the tribes of Israel, not to be introduced into it by baptism. They are already the servants of God, not to be constituted such. The office of the sealing angel is to work a change in their relations as members of the visible church, by which they shall be conspicuously shown to be the true servants of God, in contradistinction from the apostate members who marshal themselves under the banners of the wild beast and nationalized hierarchies.

Mr. Faber regards the symbol as denoting a separation, in the age of Constantine, of the faithful followers of Christ from the great body of the visible church, by their retreat into the valleys of the Alps. But that is to misconceive the symbol. The office of the seal is to render those on whom it is impressed conspicuous as the children of God, in contradistinction from worshippers of the wild beast; not to withdraw them into seclusion.

Mr. Elliott, interpreting the vision also of the same period, regards the angel bearing the seal as the Son of God, the seal as denoting the Holy Spirit, the illumination by his influences and quickening of the true servants of God in the visible church as the sealing, and their holiness the mark on their foreheads. But this in like manner proceeds on a false interpretation of the period and import of the seals. It contradicts the law of symbolization in exhibiting the angel as a representative of the Son of God, and the seal of the Holy Spirit. A seal is an instrument, not an agent. And finally, it implies that the being sealed is no peculiarity of the servants of God at the period to which the vision refers, but the common characteristic of all his servants of all ages, and contradicts, therefore, the whole representation of the vision. Are there any of the servants of God who are not enlightened by the Spirit, quickened and made to bring forth the fruits of righteousness? Is there the slightest indication in history, that the true people of God became more conspicuously such by discrimination from mere nominal Christians, and higher degrees of knowledge and piety, during the reign of Constantine and his succes-

sors, than at former periods? No assumption can be more at war with the universal representation of the writers of that and the following ages. How is the assumption that the agency of the seal-bearing angel is no peculiarity of the period, to be reconciled with his ascent from the east as though entering on his mission, the representation that he was about to commence and speedily to complete it, and the restraint of the tempest angels from entering on their office, till he could fulfil his? All the constructions which refer the vision to those early ages, are thus alike inconsistent with the symbol and the characteristics of those periods.

The expositions given by Vitringa, Dean Woodhouse, and Mr. Cuninghame of the agents and subordinate parts of the symbol, are inaccurate also, as well as of its principal aim. Thus Vitringa regards the seal-bearing angel as representing the Holy Spirit; Mr. Cuninghame exhibits him as denoting the Son of God, and the seal as an emblem of the Holy Spirit, all which are against analogy. Dean Woodhouse regards the sealed as not improbably Israelitish Christians, and the sealing as implying, therefore, a previous conversion of the Jews, which is to treat the symbol and those whom it represents as of the same species, and is thence against analogy. If the tribes represent the Israelites, why do not the angels denote angels, the winds winds, the seal a seal, and the numbers literal numbers? Mr. Cuninghame regards it as the office of the four angels to restrain the winds, not to arouse and direct them, and accordingly, with many others, interprets the winds as the symbols of destruction itself, instead of the causes which produce it. Their interpretations are marked by other subordinate inaccuracies, but these are sufficient to show that a strict adherence to analogy requires the construction which I have given.

SECTION XV.

CHAPTER VII. 9-17.

THE MULTITUDE IN WHITE ROBES.

AFTER these, I looked, and behold a great multitude which no one could number, of every nation and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white

robes and [having] palm branches in their hands. And they cry with a loud voice, saying, The salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. And all the angels stood in the circuit of the throne and of the elders and of the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen. The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanks, and the honor, and the dominion, and the might to our God forever and ever, Amen. And one of the elders spake, saying to me, These who are clothed in white robes, who are they, and whence have they come? And I said to him, O my Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they who come out of the great tribulation and washed their robes and purified them in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple. And he who sits on the throne shall dwell in a tent among them. They shall not hunger any more, nor thirst any more, neither can the sun strike them, nor any heat, because the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall guide them, and shall lead them unto the fountains of the waters of life, and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes.

The scene of this vision is the divine presence. The innumerable multitude stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and are undoubtedly the redeemed raised from the dead, publicly accepted and exalted to the station of heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ in his kingdom. They are clothed in white robes, which denotes their justification. They have palm branches in their hands, which are the emblems of joy on account of victory. They ascribe their salvation to God and to the Lamb, which indicates that it is accomplished. They are come out of the great tribulation, which implies that that tribulation at least with respect to them has passed; that their warfare with the antichristian powers, their struggles against temptation, their trials and their sufferings have reached their close. Their justification also, like their sanctification, is completed. They have washed their robes and cleansed them in the blood of the Lamb, and are to need, therefore, no further forgiveness, as they are no more to be stained by offences. Accordingly their redemption being completed, they are exalted to stations in the presence of God, and the honors and joys of an eternal service in his temple. He that sits on the throne is to dwell in a tent among them. They are never more to know want in any form, suffering, sorrow, or any of the necessities that are incident to this life; but the Lamb is to guide them like a shepherd, and lead them to fountains of the waters of life. This description obviously embodies all that is embraced

in the representations given in the Scriptures, of the relations, stations, and happiness of the redeemed after their resurrection. It is not indeed expressly said that they are raised from the dead, nor was such a declaration requisite to convey to us that assurance, as the representation that their salvation is completed, and that they are exalted to those stations in the presence of God which they are thence forever to fill, prohibits the supposition that their bodies still remain unransomed from the curse of sin. Their redemption will not be finished till they are raised from that ignominious penalty, and like the Saviour himself, declared to be the sons of God by a resurrection from the dead. It is that we are expressly told that is to constitute their adoption.—Rom. viii. 23. And how consonant with it are the representations of this vision! How intimate the relations to Christ to which they are exalted! How august the stations they fill! What an elevation of nature it implies, what a grandeur of intelligence, what a spotlessness and beauty of affection! How vast and majestic a change from the weaknesses, the sins, the conflicts, the miseries that marked their existence here, the agonies of death, and the darkness and ruin of the grave to which they were doomed because of their offences! And in what harmony with this is the homage of the angelic hosts, who witness their acceptance, who behold the honors with which they are crowned, who are aware of the dignity of the offices they are to fill, who know the suitability of their elevation to such a grandeur of nature and rank, that the beauty and greatness of their salvation may be worthy of the might and wisdom and love of the Redeemer, and justify the depth of humiliation to which he stooped to achieve it! They bend in prostrate homage and ascribe to him the blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanks, and the honor, and the dominion, and the might, forever and ever; which implies that the redemption of the innumerable multitude is finished, and indicates their understanding of its nature, their sense of its infinite greatness and beauty, and their feeling that it is to give birth to wonder, adoration, and joy throughout eternal ages. No earlier epoch in the progress of their redemption, no lower conception of the scene, accords with these representations.

The homage of the angelic hosts bespeaks an acquaintancé not only with the general characteristics of the work of redemption, but with the particulars also of the salvation of the innumerable multitude. The ascription to God of the glory of their salvation, is as appropriate in respect to them as individuals, as it is as a body. It implies therefore that a revision of their lives had

taken place, in a public judgment in the presence of the angels, and manifestation of the gracious agencies by which God accomplished their sanctification, and raised them to a meetness for his kingdom. It is not easy to conceive how otherwise each angel could have so perfect a knowledge of the history of each individual, as to authorize and give significance to so specific a judgment as they express. It is not credible that any created intelligence, however great, is adequate by virtue of his own faculties, to eye through every moment all the children of God who live cotemporaneously, discern all their conditions, all the influences that affect them, all their perceptions, emotions, and volitions, and form a perfect estimate of their dangers, imperfections, and sins, on the one hand, and their virtue on the other. The perception of such an infinite complication of natures, agents, causes, influences, and effects, would involve the powers of omniscience. Their knowledge therefore must be acquired by a public revision of the divine administration over the redeemed, and revelation in that manner of all the events of their lives, and all the secrets of God's agency: and the ascription of the angels is an expression of the conviction to which that manifestation carried them. It indicates accordingly, with an awful emphasis, that the great truth which is disclosed and demonstrated in the sanctification of men up to that period, is that their salvation is wholly the work of God; that were it not for the sovereign and almighty aids of his Spirit, and the special care of his providence, not an individual unrenewed or renewed would ever advance a step in preparation for his kingdom: and it is the demonstration in so many forms, and on so vast a scale doubtless of that truth, and the verification thereby of all the grounds respecting the alienation of men on which the work of redemption proceeds, that is to prepare the way for the dispensation that is to follow, under which, through a long succession of ages, the whole race is to be sanctified.

Commentators vary equally in their expositions of this vision; those who refer the former to the early ages, interpreting this also of the church on earth and of the same times. Thus Grotius, Eichhorn, and Rosenmuller, who regard the other as representing the preservation of the Jewish Christians, exhibit this as symbolizing the purity, preservation, and happiness of the numerous Gentile converts of the same period. But that is to disregard the representation that they were in the divine presence, not on earth; that they were come out of the great tribulation, not that they were approaching the first of the long series

of persecutions which began with Nero ; that their salvation was completed ; that they were no more to suffer want or sorrow ; and that they were to dwell forever in the presence of the Lamb. Their exposition indeed completely reverses the symbol. The temple in heaven is not the emblem, but the antitype of the temple on earth. It was after the pattern of the heavenly, that the tabernacle was formed—Hebrews viii. 5, ix. 23, 24 ; the holy of holies representing the temple above, and the entrance into it of the high priest, the ascent of the Redeemer to that higher sanctuary. When the redeemed accordingly are exhibited as admitted to reside in his presence, he is said as in this passage to dwell in a tent with them, and they are represented as serving him in his temple ; and when the church above is exhibited as returning again to reside below, it is under the symbol of the New Jerusalem in which God dwells, descending from heaven to earth.

Mr. Daubuz refers it, like the sealing, to the reign of Constantine, and regards it as denoting the release of the church by that emperor from persecution, its legalization, its intimate association with the government, and patronage by the erection of edifices for its worship, the grant to it of revenues, and the gift to its members of civil offices. That, however, is in like manner to reverse the meaning of the symbols, and contradict the language of the vision. It is to make heaven the representative of earth, and the heavenly temple the type instead of the antitype of the temple below. It is to symbolize a release from one species of trials by deliverance from all, and the gift of temporal and worldly advantages by the honors and enjoyments of eternal life, which is the converse of analogy. But, beyond the grant of toleration, the changes wrought in the condition of the church by Constantine, instead of honorable and salutary, were degrading and pernicious in the extreme. His legalization of it and patronage, were founded on the assumption of the right of dominion over its doctrines, worship, ministers, and government, and was an impious usurpation therefore of the prerogatives of God. It was, in truth, an adoption of it by the dragon, and subordination of its faith, worship, and ministers to the sway of that monster ; and the church, in assenting to it, sanctioned that usurpation, and so far transferred its homage from God to that antagonist power. That assumption of the divine right is accordingly represented in a subsequent vision, by the violent elevation of the man-child to the throne of the Almighty, and its disastrous influence on the church shown by the flight of the woman into the desert. No

more unfortunate mistake therefore could be made than to exhibit such an apostasy from God to the dragon, as the fulfilment of the vision representing the innumerable multitude of the redeemed of all nations and ages, raised from the grave, presented by the Son in the presence of the Father, justified, adopted, adjudged on his account to everlasting life, and testifying their gratitude by ascribing to him their salvation.

Bishop Newton interprets it of the large accessions to the church during the reigns of Constantine and his successors to Theodosius ; Mr. Brightman of the multitudes of true believers added after the thirteenth century, and finally of the conversion of the Jews. But their constructions also reverse the symbolization, and make earth the scene instead of heaven, and the sinning, the suffering, and mortal, the subjects, instead of those who are raised from death to immortality.

Mr. Lowman regards the multitude as the spirits of the redeemed in heaven. But that is to exhibit their bodies as still under the sentence of death, and their redemption therefore as incomplete. Vitringa interprets it of the prosperous state of the church in this world that is to follow the overthrow of Antichrist, which is again to contradict analogy, and make heaven the representative of earth. Mr. Cuninghame regards the multitude as a portion of the church of the same period as the sealed, but of inferior fidelity, and on that account to be left to severe trial, at the loosing of the four winds, but at length with perhaps others converted from heathenism, to obtain deliverance : Mr. Elliott, as the sealed in the enjoyment of their final happiness in heaven : Dean Woodhouse, as the whole body of the redeemed living as well as dead, raised to the divine presence in heaven, or if on earth, subsequently to a regeneration of the present globe ; variations from the exposition I have given on which I need not dwell. The period represented by the vision, I regard as that which is to intervene between the first resurrection and the descent of the new Jerusalem ;—the act, the presentation by the Saviour of his redeemed raised from death to the Father, their public justification in the presence of the angelic hosts, adoption as his sons, and welcome to the honors and joys of serving in the immediate presence of the Lamb throughout his eternal reign.

We are thus furnished by the law of analogy with a consistent, satisfactory, and easy solution of the first six seals. The great actors and events which they foreshadow, are found, as far as they are already in existence, graven in the utmost distinctness on the page of history ; and of a significance that corresponds

to the beauty or awfulness of the symbols by which they are represented, and the infinite interests they affect. No forced constructions are requisite; no deviations from an obvious and invariable law. They present a miniature delineation of all the great characters which the ministers of the church have assumed from age to age, and the changes they have wrought in its dispositions, its faith, and its worship. They conduct us into the invisible world, and disclose to us the acceptance, the glory, and blessedness during their intermediate existence, of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. They lift the veil from the future, and exhibit the approaching separation of the servants of God from the apostate church, and renunciation of the usurped dominion of the wild beast, and the whirlwind commotions that are thence to spring and sweep to destruction the towering fabrics of antichristian rule; and finally, they display to us the innumerable multitude of the sanctified, raised from the grave, presented by the Redeemer to the Father, and accepted, adopted, and assigned to stations and services in his presence through his everlasting reign. And what a demonstration they form of the omniscience of their Author! What a vast succession of agents, in what new combinations, and of what unusual characters they foreshow! What an infinite complication of extraordinary and unexampled events, beautiful and awful, fraught with boundless blessings to men, and with immeasurable evils, and that are to extend their influence through interminable ages! Who but he who creates, and who rules all, could have drawn a single line of such a portraiture? Who but the All-beholding could have traced in so brief a space, so perfect an image of the great actors and actions of so many ages?

This solution of the seals is important also in its relations to the visions which immediately follow; as it makes it apparent from their nature that they relate to periods far earlier than several of the later seals, and that a formal notice of the commencement of a new series of disclosures was unnecessary.

SECTION XVI.

CHAPTER VIII. 1-5.

THE SEVENTH SEAL.

AND when he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven, as it were a half hour. And I saw the seven angels who stood before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer. And much incense was given to him that he should offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense ascended with the prayers of the saints from the angel's hand before God. And the angel took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and cast to the earth. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

The heaven, of which the half hour's silence is affirmed, was doubtless the heaven of the divine presence, not the earth's atmosphere. The silence was symbolic, as well as the agents and acts that followed at the altar, and the phenomena of the distant spectacle. It was a period of thoughtfulness, awe, and expectancy; and denotes doubtless that ere the great judgments about to be symbolized, were to be inflicted, the redeemed in heaven and angelic hosts were to be called by contemplation, submission, and faith, to a preparation for the displays of justice which they were to witness. It implies also that during a short period, no new agents were to go forth to work important changes in the world, and thence that there should be a brief space of tranquility, compared with that which had preceded and was to follow, and a space marked in a pre-eminent degree by fervent supplications by the church for deliverance from the power of a persecuting government. The period on earth corresponding to that silence, probably, from the symbolizations that follow, was that of repose which intervened between the close of the persecution by Diocletian and Galerius in April of the year 311, and the commencement near the close of that year, of the civil wars by which Constantine the Great was elevated to the imperial throne.¹

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 34, 35, 44. Baronii annal. anno 311, no. 34, an. 312, no. 7. Pagi Crit. in annal. Baron. anno 311, no. 14, 15, anno 312, no. 3. Constantius Chlorus was declared Cæsar in the year 292. The persecution by

The period from the persecution by Diocletian to that by Licinius commenced in 319, was marked by impassioned desires and hopes by the church, for the elevation to power, not only of a tolerant, but of a Christian prince, who should free it from the danger of extinction, with which the repetition of an exterminating war like that of Diocletian and Galerius seemed to threaten it.¹ That period answers to the other conditions of the symbol also. It immediately preceded a violent convulsion in the Roman empire in which the church had a deeper interest than in any other that has occurred, and in which there was a tempestuous conflict of opinion, such as voices, lightnings, and thunders denote, and a subversion of ancient institutions, analogous to the demolition of fortresses, temples, and cities, by an earthquake. That revolution also was followed by a long succession of great and peculiar events answering to the symbols of the trumpets, and to extend like the seals to the advent of the Redeemer. From the fifth of those symbols, it is apparent that the church had, at the period which it represents, apostatized. The men who were to be tormented by its scorpion locusts, were they who had not the seal of God on their foreheads, which, as we have learned from the vision of the seventh chapter, marks his true worshippers, and makes them visible as such, in contradistinction from apostates. As the first four trumpets preceded the fifth, and the fifth indisputably commenced in the early part of the seventh century, we are constrained, by the inadequacy of all other events, to refer the first four to the subversion of the western Roman empire by the Goths; and thence, as no others of that nature preceded them, to regard the voices, lightnings, thunders, and earthquake, as symbols of the agitations, contests, and revolutions, which attended the elevation of Constantine and subversion of paganism, and extending therefore from the commencement of his war with Maxentius, in the year 311, to the death of Theodosius in 395. This is confirmed also by the resemblance of this vision to that of the twelfth chapter, in which the church is exhibited under the symbol of a majestic woman, desiring to give birth to a man-child who should rule the nations with an iron

Diocletian and Galerius commenced in March, 303: Constantius Chlorus became Augustus in 305, and died in 306, when Constantine succeeded him, with the rank, however, of Cæsar only. Galerius yielded toleration to the church in April, 311, and died in the May following. The war between Constantine and Maxentius commenced towards the close of 311, and ended in the defeat and death of Maxentius 28th October, 312.

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. i. Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. ii. c. 1, 2, 3, 4. Sozomeni Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 7.

sceptre. Those desires and cries were of the period between the elevation and death of Constantius Chlorus. They were followed like these by the fall of the votaries of paganism into a minority in the empire, by an apostasy of the church, and by the flight of the woman into the desert. That man-child indisputably represented Constantine and his successors, with the exception of Julian. They in claiming dominion over the faith and worship of the church, usurped the throne of God, and led to an apostasy. The fall of the pagan party took place during their reigns, and was immediately followed by the incursions of the Goths, which the symbols of the first four trumpets denote. These and the immense train of correspondences of the successive trumpets extending through fifteen centuries, and which are found in no degree in any other events, furnish a vast and irresistible demonstration that the period of tranquillity immediately before their commencement, is that which the silence denotes. To find any other train of agents and agencies that accord with these symbols, is as impossible, as it is to find any other empire than the Roman that answers to their scene, or any other department of life than the civil and military in that empire, to which those actors can have belonged.

That the seven angels—though they appear immediately after the silence, and receive their trumpets—do not enter on their office until the prayers of the saints have been offered and answered by a tempest and earthquake in the empire, denotes that the events that were to be symbolized in connection with their agency, could not take place until those supplications had received an answer, and were to follow in some relation as consequences of them.

And another angel came and stood at the altar of sacrifice, which was in the court immediately before the vestibule of the temple, and on which the fire was never extinguished,¹ having a golden censer with which to take coals from the altar. While in that station an attendant gave to him much incense, that he should offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar in the sanctuary or main temple, immediately before the entrance to the holy of holies. Receiving the incense and filling the censer with coals,² he proceeded into the sanctuary, and firing the incense on the golden altar, the smoke ascended before the holy of holies, in which was the throne of the Almighty. Then returning to the altar of sacrifice in the court, he filled the censer again with coals, and cast to the earth, and there were voices, and

¹ Leviticus vi. 12, 13.

² Levit. xvi. 12, 13. Luke i. 9, 10.

thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake. This action is obviously symbolic of an agency, not on earth, but in heaven. To suppose that the angel offering incense personates agents on earth, is to suppose the throne also to be on earth, and the being who sat on it, which is not only to contradict the vision, but as there is no visible being enthroned in the church on earth but the pope, and none but he to whom homage is paid, it is to imply that it is he who is symbolized in the vision as the object of worship, which is the most revolting of errors. As the throne then was in heaven, and he who sat on it the eternal Word, so the angel offering the incense symbolized an agent in his presence, not on earth, and the offering of the incense an act exerted in his presence, not in our world. It denoted therefore that there was to be a visible recognition in the presence of the Redeemer of the supplications of the church on earth, by a memorial or representative, symbolized by the offering of incense. The angel personated the order of beings who fulfilled that office. As the fire of the altar is the symbol of the instruments of divine justice, the angel's filling his censer with coals from the altar, after his return from the sanctuary, and casting them to the earth, denoted that the prayers of the church were to be answered by avenging justice; and the voices, lightnings, thunders, and earthquake that followed, that that justice was to be inflicted in a succession of violent commotions in the empire, in which the visible church was to have an immediate interest.

Eichhorn and Rosenmuller regard the silence as introduced by the apostle, merely in order to the adjustment of the dramatic action, and without signification therefore. But that is to set aside the symbolic character of the scene. Grotius interprets the voices, lightnings, thunders, and earthquake, as symbols of similar phenomena that preceded and heralded the calamities of the siege of Jerusalem, and that were themselves presages of those calamities; which is in the first place to exhibit them as of the same species as the events they represented, and next to make them representatives of representatives, which are alike against the laws of symbolization.

The commentators who interpret the sixth seal of events of the reign of Constantine, refer this vision to his reign also, or the period from his victory over Licinius to the commencement of the Gothic invasions, but differ widely in their views of its import. Mr. Brightman regards Constantine as the angel offering incense, the odors his power of assembling a council to settle the dissensions of the church, the smoke of the incense the ac-

tion of the council, and the voices, thunders, and earthquake, the contentions to which the decisions of the council gave birth; incongruities, were they not the offspring of a misconception of the law of symbolization that is common to later interpreters, it would scarcely be necessary to refute. They are against analogy. The ritual of the temple is a fit type of the spiritual worship of the Christian church, but there is no analogy between that ritual and the usurpation of authority over the church by a civil ruler, and attempt to dictate its faith and worship. There is an obvious resemblance between an earthquake which heaves the massiest structures from their foundations and prostrates whole cities, and a political revolution in which ancient institutions are undermined and overthrown; but there is no resemblance between such a convulsion which strows the earth with ruin, and the differences and dissatisfactions of a church in respect to the decrees of a council.

Mr. Daubuz regards the silence as a symbol of the liberty granted to the church by Constantine to worship without obstruction; the gift of incense to the angel, whom he exhibits as a representative of the ministers of the church, as the gift of revenues for the erection of edifices for worship and the support of ministers; the voices, thunders, and lightnings, as their public and zealous proclamation of the word of God. But what analogy is there between silence and a liberty to offer an audible worship; between the gift of incense, the symbol of acceptable supplication, and the gift of revenues to build magnificent structures and support ministers, without any reference to the nature of the worship to which those structures were to be devoted, or the doctrines those ministers were to teach; between the lightnings and thunders of a tempest, and the proclamation to men of the glad tidings of salvation?

Cocceius regards the angel as Christ, the golden censer as the will of the Eternal Spirit through which he offered himself a sacrifice for us; the altar as denoting the dignity of his deity, and the incense his merits; the fire from the altar as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, and its dejection to the earth as denoting an effusion of his influences and distribution of gracious gifts; all which are wholly against analogy.

Vitringa interprets the silence of the millennium of peace which is to follow the overthrow of the wild beast and false prophet, and the angel offering incense of Christ. But what analogy is there between a half hour of silence, and a thousand years of perpetual homage, activity in the service of God, and

joy ; or between a half hour followed by trumpets, vials, the destruction of a wild beast and false prophet, and thence a thousand years of righteousness and peace ; and a thousand years of righteousness succeeded by no such trumpets or vials, wild beast or false prophet ? What analogy is there between heaven and earth, that the one can symbolize the other ; or what resemblance between an angel who offers homage in the presence of Christ, and Christ in whose presence that homage is offered ? Created agents are never employed to symbolize the Redeemer, either in person or office.

Dean Woodhouse and Mr. Cuninghame regard the silence as indicating the termination of that series of events which the former seals denote, and the commencement of a new train of revelations. But what adaptation has a half hour's silence to show that the series of symbols that follow it, commence at a period many ages earlier than that at which the preceding series closed ? If it be a representative of time, it undoubtedly represents a period that intervenes between the two series, not that, or a chief part of that, which the preceding series had measured. But it is the half hour that indicates the time, while the silence is a symbol of its characteristic, and in distinction doubtless from that which preceded and followed.

Mr. Elliott interprets the silence of the suspension of the winds during the sealing of the servants of God. But what certainty can there be of interpretation, if events may in that manner be transferred from one seal to another to meet the exigences of a theory ? The philology on which he finds that transference, is as unsatisfactory as the construction he employs it to support. If the aorist in the first verse be used as the pluperfect, it must be held to be used in place of that tense also in all the other instances in which it occurs both in this passage and those that follow, and will exhibit the voices, and thunders, and earthquake, therefore, as well as the silence, as preceding the opening of the seal, and the hail and fire that follow the first trumpet, as having preceded that trumpet. There is no more infallible mark of the error of an interpretation, than that it is built on a deviation from the most simple and uniform laws of language. The meaning is invariably that which these laws, most fully understood and implicitly followed, constrain us to adopt. It is equally against analogy. What resemblance is there between silence, and a suspension of tempestuous winds ? A deep calm is more favorable to the transmission of sound, than any other condition of the atmosphere. Mr. Cuninghame

interprets the voices, lightnings, and earthquake, of the political convulsions and revolutions by which paganism was overthrown and Christianity adopted as the religion of the state, but regards them as consummated during the reign of Constantine.

SECTION XVII.

CHAPTER VIII. 6, 7.

THE FIRST TRUMPET.

AND the seven angels who held the seven trumpets prepared themselves that they might sound. And the first sounded. And there were hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast to the earth, and the third part of the earth was burned, and the third part of the trees was burned, and all green grass was burned.

The angels' preparation of themselves that they might sound, was probably a removal from before the throne to a distant station, and possibly over that part of the earth which was to be the scene of their respective symbols. The sanctuary to which the apostle had ascended through the opened heavens was doubtless immediately over Patmos, and at a vast elevation, whence, as that island is in the *Ægean* opposite to Miletus, the apocalyptic earth was visible.

The angels are not to be considered as the representatives of the agents on earth, who are instrumental in giving birth to the movements which their several symbols denote. There is no conceivable analogy between the blast of a trumpet, and the excitement of a whirlwind, the projection of a volcanic mountain into the sea, or any of the other events which their symbols foreshadow. Their office, therefore, is simply like that of the interpreting angels and the seals of the book, to assist in conducting the revelation, distinguish the periods of the several events, and exhibit them in their relation to God.

As neither hail, lightnings, nor rain descend to the earth except from clouds, the symbol obviously was a violent storm, in which the lightnings instead of limited flashes, were diffused through the whole atmosphere. They were equally dispersed with the bloody rain, and spread devastation wherever the tempest fell.

The third part of the earth denotes a third of the Roman empire, in distinction from the other two-thirds, not a third of what-

ever was destructible by fire on that part of the earth where the whirlwind passed ; such as flocks, herds, dwellings, cities, utensils, and other works of art ; as is seen from its use in respect to the trees, the third of which on the other hand denotes, not the trees of a third part of the Roman territory, but a third of the trees on that part over which the tempest swept. This is apparent from the destruction of all grass wherever the storm fell, without exception of places or parts. If it had extended over the whole apocalyptic scene, the discrimination of the trees clearly could not be supposed to have been by territories ; and as their survivance could not have been owing to an exemption from the tempest, it must have resulted from their harder nature, or more favorable station. That is equally evident also in respect to that portion of the territory over which the whirlwind spread. As wherever it swept, it destroyed all green grass, it must be supposed to have exerted a proportional power on the trees. It is the ratio therefore of the destruction of the trees to the destruction of the grass, which the term is in this instance employed to express, not the proportion of the region over which the devastation extended, to the empire at large. As the fire was cast to the earth as well as the hail and rain, and must therefore have covered the whole surface wherever the storm raged, it was natural that a growth so frail as green grass, should be wholly destroyed by a heat so extreme as to burn one-third of the trees.

What now, in order to accord with the symbol, must be the characteristics of that which it denotes ? It must be a mighty and destructive agent, or combination of agents. It must descend on the apocalyptic earth from without. It must on fulfilling its office in a degree disappear, or mingle itself with the surrounding elements, as hail, rain, and fire, when cast to the earth, soon enter into new combinations, or assume new forms of existence. It must belong to some other department than the physical world, and exert its agency on some different and analogous class of objects. There is no counterpart to the physical world, but the intelligent, and but two forms of the intelligent, the civil and the religious. But it cannot be the latter to which the agents whom the symbol designates belong. No combination of men employed in the mere propagation of religion, or acting as mere religionists, intruded into the Roman empire either after or before the reign of Constantine, who destroyed one-third of those entertaining a different religious belief throughout one-third, or any considerable part of its territory. The only class that has made

destructive incursions into the empire were warriors, and when their intrusions carried with them the propagation of a new religion, it was only subordinately and consequentially. We are led then from the want of any corresponding agents in the religious world, to the civil and military for the counterpart of the symbol, and find a most exact and conspicuous coincidence with all its characters in the Gothic hordes, who intruded into the eastern empire and along the Danube and Rhine at the close of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century. They entered the empire from without. They were forced into it by the Huns and other more northern hordes, who violently drove them from their dwellings, as the vapor and electricity of a storm are driven over a territory, not by powers inherent in themselves, but by the wind. Their incursions were marked by a terrible slaughter of the inhabitants and destruction by exposure, famine, and sickness, consequent on the ruin of their dwellings and crops; and under these calamities the young, the feeble, and the aged, which to the stronger are as grass compared to trees, sunk in greater proportion than the active and sturdy. And finally, on fulfilling their office of destruction, they in a large degree disappeared as organized bodies, either by slaughter and pestilence, intermixture with the surviving population, or a retreat from the empire. The invaders of Italy especially erected no independent government, and made no absolute conquest, but like a tornado, which strewing a fertile region with the wreck of its groves and its crops, rapidly wafts off, and gives place to tranquillity, they soon disappeared, and left few other traces than the ruins of devastated cities and villas and the silence of depopulation.

The correspondence of these great agents and agencies with the symbols, is seen from the following passages from cotemporary writers, and the historians of the period.

Jerome says: "It fills one with horror to trace the devastations of the time. For twenty years and more Roman blood has been daily shed between Constantinople and the Julian Alps. The Goths, Sarmatians, Quadi, Alans, Hunns, Vandals, and Marcomanni, have plundered and devastated Scythia, Thrace, Macedonia, Dardania, Dacia, Thessalonia, Achaia, Epirus, Dalmatia, and the Pannonias. How many matrons, how many consecrated virgins and persons of worth and rank, have been mocked by those brutes! The bishops have been made prisoners, the presbyters and clergy of other orders slain, the churches demolished, horses stabled at the altars of Christ, and the bones of the martyrs disinterred. Wailing and groans

have been everywhere, and death in all its forms. The Roman world is falling."¹

"The barbarians meeting with little resistance, indulged in the utmost cruelty. The cities which they captured, they so totally destroyed that no traces of them now remain, especially in Thrace and Greece, except here and there a tower or a gate. All the men who opposed them they slew, young and old, and indeed spared not women nor even children; whence there is still but a sparse population in Italy. The plunder which they seized in every part of Europe was immense, and especially at Rome, where they left nothing either public or private."²

"The banks of the Rhine were crowned like those of the Tyber with houses and well-cultivated farms, and if a poet descended the river he might express his doubts on which side was situated the territory of the Romans. This scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man. The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed, and many thousand Christians were inhumanly massacred in the church. Worms perished after a long and obstinate siege; Strasburg, Spire, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke; and the consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich and extensive country as far as the ocean, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the Barbarians, who drove before them in a promiscuous crowd the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their houses and altars."³

Commentators vary as usual in their views of the import of this symbol. Grotius interprets the hail of an obduration of the heart, and the blood of sanguinary passions, or resentment, which is to make agents symbols of qualities or passions instead of actors, and is thence against analogy. He, with Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, and Rosenmuller, refers the symbol, as well as those that follow, to the Jewish war. But there are no resemblances. No great revolution like that denoted by the voices, thunders, lightnings, and earthquake following the casting of the fire to the earth, preceded that war. The army assailing the Jews did not enter Judea from without the empire. The Roman army did not disappear by intermixture with the people of Judea, retreat, or

¹ Hieron. Epist. iii. tom. i. p. 17.

² Procopii Hist. Vandal. lib. i. p. 6.

³ Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. xxx. vol. iii. p. 183.

annihilation after the termination of the contest. It was the Jews who were disbanded by the conflict, not their conquerors; and finally, that war had passed before the period of the vision.

The construction by Dean Woodhouse, who interprets it of the persecution of the church by the Jews, is embarrassed by similar objections. That persecution had chiefly passed before the period of the revelation. It was not preceded by any important change of the Roman government, such as is denoted by the earthquake. The persecutors did not come from without the empire. It was the Roman magistrates, not the Jews, who put the Christians to death. The Jews had no political power. They were subjects, not rulers. The Jews did not disappear from the scene on the close of that persecution.

Mr. Brightman regards the hail as symbolizing the tumults occasioned by the Arian bishops, who were dissatisfied with the decrees of the council of Nicæa, the blood as representing the persecution of the church by the successors of Constantine, the trees and grass the members of the church, and their destruction their apostasy to false doctrines. But that is in like manner without any of the requisite correspondences. What analogy is there between the descent of a destructive hail-storm, and the dissension of bishops and churches respecting the decisions of a council; between the devastation of a vast tract of country by a burning tornado, borne from a distant region, and the slaughter of a few thousand Christians by those under whose rule they lived; or between the destruction of fields and groves by such an invading whirlwind, and the voluntary apostasy of churches and individuals to erroneous doctrine?

Vitringa regards the hail, lightning, and blood as symbols of famine, pestilence, and war, and interprets them of those with which the Roman empire was wasted from Decius to Gallienus. But that is to construe the symbol by its parts, not as a whole; an error common to the great body of interpreters, and more fruitful of misconception, perhaps, than any other. Their inquiry has been, not what power, uniting in itself all the characters of that burning whirlwind, invaded the Roman empire and spread it with slaughter; but what are hail, fire, and blood used to denote in other passages of Scripture, or what are they severally adapted to denote; and have interpreted them accordingly independently of each other, as though separately employed as metaphors, in place of being united in a symbol. Hence, as fire is often used to metaphorize wrath, Grotius interprets the lightnings of exasperation; and hail, as it is hard, of an obduration

of heart. As whirlwinds which uproot trees and throw the barren soil to the surface, create sterility, and sterility gives birth to scarcity, Vitringa interprets that agency of the tempest of famine, and for like reasons, lightnings of pestilence, and blood of war. Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Daubuz, Bishop Newton, Dean Woodhouse, and most others, follow that rule universally. But it is as alien from the laws of symbolization, as it were from those of language, to interpret the words of a sentence independently of their relation to each other. Wind, vapor, ice, rain, lightning, united in one resistless agent, and sweeping devastation over a fertile country, are as different from those elements taken separately, as the muscle, bone, nerve, life, and sense that united make up a ferocious wild beast, are from its constituent parts when divested of life and distributed to their several elements; and it is accordingly as preposterous to seek the import of a prophetic symbol by an analysis of its parts, as it were to attempt to ascertain the nature of an animal, by a chemical examination of the last forms into which its body is capable of being resolved.

Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Whiston, Bishop Newton, Mr. Faber, Mr. Cuninghame, and many other commentators, unite in regarding the symbol as denoting the invasion of the empire by the Goths; some interpreting it of their first incursions from the year 363 or 376 to 395, others, with whom I concur, of those following the death of Theodosius in 395 to 410. It was not until the reign of Theodosius that the great revolution denoted by the earthquake, and commenced under Constantine, was consummated by the legal prohibition of paganism and adoption of Christianity as the sole religion of the empire.¹

SECTION XVIII.

CHAPTER VIII. 8, 9.

THE SECOND TRUMPET.

AND the second angel sounded; and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea. And the third of the sea

¹ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. x. leg. 7-12. Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. xxviii.

became blood, and the third of the creatures in the sea which had life died, and the third of the ships were destroyed.

This symbol is a volcanic mountain, thrown up from its ancient station at a vast distance by an explosion of the flaming elements at its base, precipitated into the Mediterranean Sea, spread out to the eye of the prophet as he stood at the vestibule of the temple, and from that position projecting its burning lava over the neighboring waters, discoloring them by the gleam of its fires or the intermixture of its ashes, strewing them with fish destroyed by its poisonous minerals or heat, and firing the ships or dashing them by the descent of heavy masses. The third of the sea denotes, as in the former symbol, the proportion of the surface of the water which was discolored, and the third of the fish and of the ships, the proportion of the fish and ships that were destroyed to the whole; not the whole of the water, the fish, and the ships of one-third of the sea, in distinction from the other two-thirds. The masses thrown from a volcano fall at different points, and leave wide interspaces unaffected. The direction of the lighter elements is determined largely by the wind. They shower as the breeze varies, or they ascend into different currents of air, now on this region and now on that.

An agent descending into the Roman empire, to correspond with this symbol, must obviously be one of great power, impelled from its ancient position by an irresistible force, carrying within itself the elements of annoyance and destruction to surrounding objects, assuming a fixed station in the empire, and thence frequently projecting the instruments of devastation and death on the neighboring regions. And such most conspicuously were the Vandals under Genseric, who forced from their native seat by the Hunns, passed through France and Spain into Africa, conquered the Carthaginian territory, established an independent government, and thence through a long period, harassed the neighboring islands and the Mediterranean shores by predatory and devastating incursions, intercepting the commerce of the sea, plundering and firing the cities, and slaughtering the inhabitants.¹ These latter characteristics were peculiar to them,

¹ "Genseric having strengthened himself by Moorish auxiliaries, as often as spring returned, harassed now Sicily, now Italy, by marauding invasions; reducing some cities to servitude, demolishing others, and exhausting all by plunder and exactions, until induced by their devastation and poverty to sail away, he turned to the eastern empire, and invaded Illyria, Peloponnesia, and the adjacent islands, and returning again entered Italy and Sicily, and gleaned whatever plunder he had before left."—Procopii Hist. Vandal. lib. i. p. 18. Also Isidori Hist. Vandal. pp. 733–735. Gibbon's Hist. chap. xxxvi.

and distinguished them from the earlier and later Gothic armies, as widely as a volcano differs in its fixed station and distinctive agency, from the rapid movement and transitory influence of a burning tornado.

The different views which writers have given of the symbol present nothing to invalidate this exposition. Grotius exhibits both the sea and the fish as the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the mountain as the fortress Antonia, and the ships as the sacred vessels which were plundered from the temple; a fancy too absurd to need a refutation. Was the tower Antonia precipitated into the city from a distance? Is there any analogy between ships floating the ocean, navigated by men, laden with treasures, and fired or sunk by burning masses from a distant volcano, and tongs, snuffers, censers, knives, cups, plates, and other utensils, plundered from the temple?

Dr. Hammond and Rosenmuller interpret the sea of Galilee, the volcano of the army of Vespasian desolating it in the year 69, the fish of the Jewish population, and the ships of the cities. But they are without any correspondence with the symbol. The Roman army did not enter Galilee from without the empire. Vespasian did not establish a new and independent government; he merely checked an insurrection, and reinstated the Roman power in its supremacy. His was not a wanton attack on the peaceable and unoffending for mere plunder and devastation; but a resistance of assailants and a conquest of revolters; and finally, its period was twenty-five or twenty-six years anterior to the visions.

Cocceius interprets the dejection of the mountain into the sea, of the overthrow of Jerusalem and the temple, and dissolution of the Jewish polity; the destruction of the fish of the relapse of men from Christianity to gentilism, and the burning of the ships, of the subversion of churches and synagogues; all which are inconsistent with the symbol. The volcanic mountain represents the destructive agent, not the subject of the destruction; and its dejection its movement to the scene of its agency, not the effects wrought on the waters by the fall of its lava. The fish denote persons that are destroyed by its agency, not such as are induced by other causes to relapse to a false worship.

Mr. Brightman regarded the sea as pure doctrine, the mountain as aspiring prelates, the fire as their ambition, the discoloration of the waters as the introduction of false doctrines, the fish as the lower ranks of ecclesiastics and the monks, the ships of those whose office it was to preach the gospel; applications

which it were not easy to transcend in absurdity. What resemblance is there between a restless and often tempestuous sea and pure doctrine; the one a mighty physical agent, the other mere propositions? Or what between the infusion into water of a foreign element, and the substitution of error for truth? What analogy is there between a ship traversing the bosom of the ocean and excluding from itself that on which it floats, and a teacher whose office it is to communicate to others the knowledge which he has treasured up in himself of the word of God?

Mr. Daubuz interprets the mountain of Rome, its burning of the conquest and conflagration of that city by Alaric, and the destruction of the ships of the plunder of its wealth. But that is to make the mountain the subject of the destructive agency in place of the destroying agent, and the plunder of itself, its destruction of distant objects.

Vitringa interprets it of the incursions of the Goths in the latter half of the third century, Mr. Mede of the sack of Rome, and devastation and conquest of the provinces from the year 410 to 450, Bishop Newton of the ravages by Attila, Dr. Cressner of the invasions and conquests of the transalpine provinces from 412 to 446, Mr. Cuninghame of the ravages of Alaric, Rhadagaisus, and others, as well as Genseric.

Dean Woodhouse, proceeding on the assumption that the events foreshadowed by the symbols of the trumpets as well as the seals, are to be sought in the religious rather than in the civil and military world, interprets the mountain of the idolatrous powers of the Roman empire, its burning of the gradual decay of that party, the sea of the gentile Christians, and the blood and devastation of their apostasy under persecution. But they present none of the required resemblances, and contradict analogy. Those idolaters did not intrude into the empire from a distant region, and establish themselves in opposition to another religious body. They did not sink from power by a natural decay, but were opposed and overthrown by antagonists of the Christian religion. The gentile Christians sustained no such relations to the Roman people at large, as a sea sustains to other waters. They were not a separate community, but intermixed promiscuously with the heathen population. And finally, though the violent destruction of the body may appropriately represent the violent destruction of the soul, the death of animals cannot symbolize a spiritual death. As the antithesis of the human body is the conscious intelligent spirit, so the antithesis of the body of a brute is that element of its nature which is the seat of its

perception and consciousness. If the death of the bodies of brutes therefore were a symbol of the death of perceptive natures, it would denote the extinction of their own perceptive and conscious nature, not a fall of intelligent beings to a false religion.

Mr. Faber, Mr. Keith, Mr. Elliott and others, interpret the symbol chiefly of the conquests and devastations by Genseric, but on grounds differing from those which have led me to that construction.

SECTION XIX.

CHAPTER VIII. 10, 11.

THE THIRD TRUMPET.

AND the third angel sounded ; and a great star burning like a torch fell from heaven, and fell on the third of the rivers and on the fountains of waters. And the star was named The Wormwood : and the third of the waters became wormwood, and many of the men died of the waters, because they were embittered.

The star obviously was not a solid globe, but a thin transparent meteor, which as it swept along near the surface and sunk to the ground, still left the objects it enveloped perceptible to the apostle ; and was soon absorbed by the waters and earth. He beheld the rivers and fountains still running, discerned a change wrought in them by the meteor, and saw that it was the new element infused into them that rendered them deadly to many of those, who dwelling on their banks at a distance, drank of them. As the scene exhibited to him was the apocalyptic earth, and the waters its real rivers and fountains, the meteor doubtless descended on a part of the Roman empire where fountains abounded and conspicuous rivers begin their course, and therefore on a mountainous region. And as the Alps give rise to a greater number of considerable streams than any others in the empire, it is probable the angel sounding the trumpet was stationed over their heights, and that the meteor fell on the lofty ranges whence the streams emerge, and the valleys through which they descend to the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, and the Euxine seas.

The third of the rivers denotes the proportion of those which the meteor embittered, to the whole. The meteor was named

The Wormwood, from its influence on the waters. It tinged them with bitterness, and became the means of death to many who resided on their borders in the distant regions which they traversed, or where they mingle with the sea.

For the counterpart of this symbol drawn from the physical, analogy requires us to look to the civil world. As in a great empire like the Roman, embracing many nations and tribes, the central and most numerous people is to distant and tributary communities, what the sea is to the fountains and streams that descend into it, the fountains obviously and rivers on which the meteor fell, are representatives of communities and tribes at a distance from the capital, which are perpetually descending towards the centre and intermixing with the main population. As the fountains and streams denote those tribes and communities, the men who were killed by the bitter infusion into their waters, are not men of those tribes and communities, but others residing on their banks in the distant countries through which they pass, or the central population towards which those tribes tend. Otherwise the poisoned waters and those who drank them were the same.

The symbol thus denotes the descent of a terrible agent on the skirts of the empire occupied by various tribes and communities, and infusion into their disposition and policy of a new element, by which they became pernicious and destructive to the central population and others.

And such pre-eminently were the characteristics of the Scythian hordes under Attila, and the effects of their invasion of the northern and western skirts of the empire. Like a meteor descending from the distant regions of the atmosphere, they came from the remote solitudes of Asia. As the elements of the star were soon absorbed by the waters where it fell, so they were wasted in a large degree in their disastrous contests with the Visigoths, Franks, and others, and disbanded and absorbed by the tribes of the Danube and Germany on the death, soon after, of Attila. The success of the Gauls, Visigoths, and Alans in resisting the aggressions of so powerful a foe, their determination to repel all further inroads of the barbarians and maintain possession of their respective territories, and the dissolution at the death of Attila of the Scythian empire, withheld the northern hordes from again invading them, and left them thereafter to subsist as separate and independent nations, and assume relations towards Italy that became the occasion to it of slaughters through a long succession of ages. Their warlike youth left without employment by their independence, soon after enlisted in large numbers in the

Italian armies and became a scourge alike to the people and rulers, and prepared the way for their subjugation; and the circle of nations around the Alps, like their rivers which have never ceased to flow, have continued from age to age to make that country their battle-field, and waste it with slaughter.

Attila was opposed at the battle of Chalons in 451, by the Visigoths, Alans, Franks, and Romans. The slaughter was so vast, that a rivulet passing through the plain is said to have become colored and swollen with blood.¹ On his advancing against the Alans in 453, he was again met on the same ground by the combined forces of that tribe and the Visigoths, and suffered an equal defeat.² He met a powerful resistance in his invasion of Italy in 452, and though he at length conquered Aquileia and wasted the cities of Lombardy, he relinquished them to the Romans and retired again beyond the Danube; and on the war between his sons and separation of the hordes that formed his army, the Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Lombards who subsequently conquered Italy, settled in Illyria and Pannonia, and were the last of the northern tribes that established kingdoms within the limits of the western empire. Their wars thereafter were wars with one another, and Italy was the prize for which not only the Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Lombards fought, but the French, Germans, and Spaniards in a large part of their wars from the eighth to the nineteenth century.

There is less diversity among interpreters in the application of this symbol, than of those that precede it. Grotius, Dr. Hammond and Rosenmuller, interpret it of some actor in the Jewish war, as Eleazar, Josephus the son of Matthias, or others, presenting, however, not the slightest trace of a correspondence. What analogy is there, for example, between Eleazar the priest's refusal to offer the emperor's sacrifices alleged as its counterpart by Rosenmuller, and the fall on fountains and streams of a star that tinges them with bitterness; between the refusal or discontinuance of an action, and the exertion of a new and momentous agency?

Mr. Brightman interprets the star of Constantius; its fall of his defection to Arianism; its embittering the waters, of his inducing the bishops to disseminate that error; and the death, of its influence on those who were seduced to its adoption. But that is wholly without analogy. Constantius, if a star, was such simply as a ruler. He was not a teacher. His fall thence, if he fell,

¹ Jornandis de Rebus Get. c. 40.

² Ibid. c. 43. Sigonii de Occid. Imp. lib. xiii. p. 227.

must have been either a precipitation from the throne to a private station, or else a descent as a conqueror on some kingdom exterior to his empire. A mere change of opinion while continuing to occupy the throne, exhibits no counterpart to the symbol.

Cocceius and Vitranga likewise expound it of Arianism, interpreting the star of the author of that error, its fall of his dejection from office, the bitterness of his false doctrine, and the death of its effects. But they are without correspondence. Arius was not brought into contact with those who were induced to adopt his opinions, by his dejection from office. Those who became his disciples were not to the church or the empire, what the fountains and streams are to the sea. The church exhibited no counterpart to the physical world, from which this symbol and those of the first, second, and fourth trumpets are drawn. As the land, the sea, the fountains and streams, and the heavenly bodies make up a whole system, so the analogous system which it represents must embrace a whole social system, and be a civil empire, therefore, which includes all classes of population, and all ranks of rulers; not the church which did not include the whole community in which it subsisted, was made up of several hierarchies that were independent of each other, had no supreme ecclesiastical head, and was subject moreover to a civil dominion.

And finally, there is an analogy between intelligent bodied beings acting on fellow intelligences as bodied beings, and such intelligences acting on each other as spirits. But there is no such analogy between the agency of a mere unintelligent cause on unintelligent or unconscious objects, and the spiritual agency of one intelligence on another. In order to analogy, either both the symbolic and the symbolized agency must be physical, both agents voluntary, or both subjects of the agency voluntary. A physical agency of an unintelligent cause may symbolize a physical agency, as by a sword, of a voluntary cause: a physical agency of a voluntary cause may symbolize a spiritual influence of a voluntary agent; and a physical agency on men a spiritual agency on them. The proper symbol thence of a spiritual influence on men, is a physical agency on them, either of man as under the second, third, and fourth seals, or of some other cause, as of a star or lamp. None of the great agents accordingly of the natural world that are used as symbols in their exertion of influences on unintelligent objects, denote men in the exertion of spiritual influences. They symbolize civil and military agents only in the exertion of a physical force, in contradistinction from a moral power.

When stars are used as symbols of teachers, it is in their relations as light giving bodies to man, not to the material world. It is in that relation also that lamps are employed to symbolize the Holy Spirit. Man is the subject in each instance of the symbolic agency, as well as that which is symbolized. Had this law been observed it would have withheld commentators from a large share of their misapplications of the prophecy.

The exposition of the symbol given by Dean Woodhouse, who interprets it of heretical teachers, such as were Simon Magus, Menander, and Cerinthus, is open to the same objection.

Mr. Lowman expounds it of the whole series of invasions and wars from Genseric to the reconquest of Italy by Justinian; Bishop Newton of the mere capture and pillage of Rome by Genseric; but neither has the requisite resemblances. As every part of the empire was devastated by those wars, what were the different and distant nations that were killed by the poisoned waters, or what communities were they, in distinction from the people of Rome, that suffered by the sack of that city?

Mr. Mede interprets the fall of the star of the dejection of the western emperor by the Heruli in the year 476. But that is to make the star the subject of the calamity, in place of the cause of it to the tribes and nations that are symbolized by the fountains and rivers.

Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Whiston, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Keith, Mr. Elliott, interpret it of the Hunns under Attila, but on the mere ground of the slaughters they occasioned, or the scene of their exploits, not of the correspondences of their agency and its results with the peculiarities of the symbol.

SECTION XX.

CHAPTER VIII. 12.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET.

AND the fourth angel sounded; and the third of the sun was smitten, and the third of the moon, and the third of the stars, that the third of them should be darkened, and the day, the third of it should not shine, and the night likewise.

As the land, the sea, and the fountains and streams, acted on by other physical causes, denote the population of an empire in

their political and military relations in which they are acted on by force ; so the sun, moon, and stars, which preside over the land and sea, and give them light and warmth, are representatives of the rulers who appoint laws to the people, and exert a chief influence in determining their physical and civil conditions ; such as the central or imperial, the provincial and the municipal. As in the Roman empire after the death of Constantine, there was more than one of each of these classes, the stroke on the sun, moon, and stars, by which a part of them was to be darkened, denotes a violent extinction of some of the governments or political organizations of those several orders ; the third part expressing the proportion of their power and influence which were to be overthrown to the whole.

That catastrophe was undoubtedly the subversion of the western imperial government and its dependent organizations, and institution in its place of a new rule by the Heruli, in the year 476. The two thirds of the sun, moon, and stars, that still shone, were the corresponding governments of the eastern empire, which at that period greatly surpassed the other in splendor and strength, and still continued to shed either a brilliant or feeble ray through near a thousand years. There is no other event that in the slightest degree meets the conditions of the symbol. As the sun, moon, and stars, were created at the same epoch with the earth which they illumine and rule, and are its only light-giving orbs through its whole period, so in order to analogy, the governments which they symbolize must sustain the same relation towards the empire over which they preside. But there is no other instance in the history of the Roman empire, in which a branch of the supreme government, with its subordinate organizations and institutions that had subsisted from the beginning, was extinguished, leaving another part of superior power still to prolong its being and shine on through many ages. There were short periods, indeed, after the division of the empire into the eastern and western, during which the imperial rule reverted wholly to the Byzantine dynasty, but the other branches of the western government continued unaltered. And that change was not an extinction in any degree of the sun. If the circuit of his disk was apparently diminished, there was a proportional increase of his effulgence, and the same influences were continued on the empire to which it had been accustomed.¹

Grotius interprets the symbol of the capture of the cities of Galilee and slaughter of the Jews by Vespasian. But those

¹ Jornandis, c. 46, pp. 679, 680. Sigonii de Occid. Imper. lib. xiii. pp. 250, 251.

cities and their people bore no such relation to the Roman empire or to Palestine, as the heavenly luminaries sustain to the earth, and cannot have been the object therefore which the latter were employed to represent.

Dr. Hammond interprets the sun of the Jewish temple, the moon of Jerusalem, the stars of its population, and their obscuration, of the siege of the city. But that is wholly without analogy. The temple was not to the empire what the sun is to the earth. The material city was not to the empire what the moon is to the earth, nor was it to the temple what the moon is to the sun. The people of the city were not to the population of the empire what the stars are to our globe; nor were they to the city and temple what the stars are to the moon and sun. No construction can be more at war with the laws of symbolization.

Mr. Brightman expounds it of the persecution of the African church by the Vandals, interpreting the sun of the Scriptures, the moon of their doctrine, the stars of the ministers of the church, and their obscuration of the destruction of the Scriptures and slaughter of the bishops. But that is equally without analogy. The Scriptures and bishops sustained no such relations to the empire as those of the sun, moon, and stars to the earth. They were not coeval with that empire. They did not rule it with a supreme power. They did not extend their light equally to its whole population. Though during that persecution many copies of the Scriptures were destroyed, yet no part of them was absolutely lost.

A like total want of correspondence with the symbol marks the exposition given by Dean Woodhouse, who interprets it of the ignorance and misconception of the gospel, which followed in the train of the false doctrines and superstitions of the third and fourth centuries. The heavenly luminaries are not proper symbols of knowledge itself, but of agents imparting knowledge. Nor did the knowledge of the gospel sustain any such relation to the population of the empire, as the light of the sun, moon, and stars sustains to the earth. It was not coeval with that population. It was never equally enjoyed by them all; and its loss, moreover, by the churches, took place through their own negligence or choice, not through the irresistible power of a foreign and hostile people.

Vitringa applies it both to the empire and the church, interpreting the obscuration of the sun of the decay of the imperial government from Valens to the fall of Augustulus, and the darkening of the moon and stars of the false doctrines and corrupt

manners which from the time of Constantine became the characteristics of the patriarchs and bishops. But that is to dissever the symbol and expound its parts independently of each other—a method which he regularly pursues, and which renders his eminent genius and learning the instruments of almost perpetual error. The power that smote the sun, the moon, and the stars was the same, but the causes which reduced the imperial government to imbecility were wholly different from those which infected the patriarchs and bishops with a corruption of doctrine and morals. Those patriarchs and bishops were not to the empire what the moon and stars are to the earth. They neither began their career with it, distributed their light equally to all its inhabitants, nor exerted a principal influence in determining their condition.

Mr. Lowman regards the fall of Rome from her rank as the capital, and transference of the government to Ravenna, as the fulfilment of the prophecy. Bishop Newton also exhibits it as a principal event in its accomplishment. But that is to confound the seat of the imperial government with the government itself; a station in the heavens occupied by the sun, with the sun itself, that sheds effulgence from that station.

Mr. Daubuz, Dr. Cressner, Mr. Whiston, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Keith, Mr. Elliott, interpret it of the fall of the western imperial government.

SECTION XXI.

CHAPTER VIII. 13.

THE ANGEL FLYING IN MID-HEAVEN.

AND I looked, and I heard one angel flying in mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to those dwelling on the earth, from the remaining voices of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.

This angel is, like the others that fly through heaven, a symbol, and denotes a class of men who, after the fall of the western empire, expressed apprehensions of a similar catastrophe to the eastern from Scythian or other distant tribes, and proclaimed to the churches that antichrist was soon to rise and be overthrown, and the dawn commence of the millennial rest.

The eastern empire is represented by the writers of the period as filled with alarms through the whole of the sixth century, by the Gepidæ, the Slavomians, the Turks, and the Persians, who hovered on its skirts, made frequent inroads into it, and threatened it with a speedy overthrow.¹ Thrace and Greece were frequently overrun by the barbarians from the Danube during the reigns of Justinian, Justin II., and Mauricius, and the capital exposed to imminent danger; while the provinces of the east were twice wrenched from the empire by the Persians, and recovered only by reconquest.²

With the apprehension of the subversion of the Greek empire which thus agitated the general mind, was conjoined an expectation by the church of a speedy rise and overthrow of antichrist and advent of the Judge of the world. It was a prevalent opinion in that and the preceding ages, that the millennium of rest was to commence with the seventh millennium of the world, and that that period was to arrive in the sixth or seventh century of the christian era. Thus Cyprian: "You ought to regard the day of trial as beginning to impend, and the sunset of the age, the time of antichrist, as already near, and to stand ready for the conflict."³ Similar views are represented by Augustine as held by many in his age.⁴

"Let the philosophers," says Lactantius, "who would compute the age of the world, know that the sixth millennium of years has not yet reached its close, and that on the completion of that number the consummation is to take place."—"That the close of the six thousand years is now approaching, may be discerned from the predictions of the prophets, for they foretold signs from which the consummation may be expected daily. How soon the period is to be completed, they who have treated of the subject have shown, by computing from the Scriptures the ages that have elapsed since the creation of the world, who although they vary somewhat, yet unite in the expectation that not more than two hundred years remain. Even things themselves would indicate that the fall and ruin of the world are at hand, were it not known that they are not to take place while the city of Rome remains safe. But when that capital of the world shall fall, who will doubt that the end of human affairs and the world itself has arrived."⁵

¹ Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. xlvi.

² Ibid. chap. xlii. xlv. xlvi.

³ Cypriani Epist. 58.

⁴ August. de Civit. Dei, lib. xx. c. 6, 7. Epist. 199, c. 17.

⁵ Lactantii de Vita Beata, c. 14, 25.

The destruction of Rome, the overthrow of all antichristian powers, and the general judgment, were accordingly proclaimed by the great teachers of the church as at hand. Of that nature are the following passages from Gregory the Great, who filled the pontifical throne from 590 to 604.

“ Our Redeemer desiring to find us ready and restrain us from the love of the world, predicted the evils that are to attend its old age, and the calamities that are immediately to precede its termination, that if we are not inclined to regard him with awe in tranquillity, we may at least, when his judgment is nigh, feel a fear of being overwhelmed by his strokes. For the Lord had said immediately before the passage to which you have now listened, nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be great earthquakes and pestilences and famines ; signs also in the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress of nations, a roaring of the sea, and waves in tumult ; some of which events we know have already taken place, and others we fear as nigh : for we see that our times are marked more than all former periods by the rise of nation against nation, and the prevalence among them of calamities. That earthquakes have overwhelmed numerous cities, you learn as often as you hear from other quarters of the world. We have pestilences without cessation. Signs indeed in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, we have not yet beheld ; but that they are not distant, we may infer from the change that has taken place in the air. Indeed, before Italy was given up to be smitten by the Gothic sword, we saw fiery armies battling in the sky, and the blood itself gleaming which was afterwards shed of the human race. And though no new commotion of the sea has hitherto arisen, yet as most of the signs foretold are already fulfilled, there is no doubt but that the few that remain are to follow. These things we mention that you may be excited to vigilance.”

“ Behold, we now see the events which were predicted. The world is oppressed with new and daily increasing evils. How few remain of the population that was once innumerable, you see ; and yet scourges still daily urge, sudden catastrophes overwhelm, new and unexpected slaughters afflict. For as in youth the body is fresh, the breast is strong and sound, the neck brawny, the arms plump, but in old age the form stoops, the withered neck declines, the breast labors with frequent sighs, strength fails, and the speech is interrupted ; for though languor is not felt, health itself to the old is often but sickness ; so the world in

earlier years flourished as it were in youth, was robust for the multiplication of the human race, fresh in the health of its animals, and abundant in its productions; but now it is depressed by its old age, and driven on as it were to the verge of death by increasing troubles. Place not your affections therefore on what you see cannot long endure. Bear in mind the apostolic direction, love not the world. Day before yesterday you know by a sudden whirlwind aged groves were uprooted, houses thrown down, and churches swept from their foundations. How many who are in health and safety at evening, and employ their thoughts on what they shall do on the morrow, die ere morning and are caught in the snare of ruin!"¹

"Such debility from fevers has spread among the clergy and people of the city, that scarce a freedman or slave remains capable of any service. Of the ravages of the pestilence in the neighboring cities we daily hear. How Africa is devastated by disease and death, as you are nearer, I presume, you are aware. But they who come from the east announce more grievous desolations. As then from all these things you know the general smiting of the world approaches, you ought not to be too much overwhelmed by your personal troubles, but, as becomes the wise and noble, recall every heart to the care of souls, and fear the more as a strict judgment is near."²

"Moreover, we wish you to know that the end of the present world is nigh, and the kingdom of the saints about to come, which is never to end. And as the end of the world approaches, many things impend which had not occurred before, such as changes of the air, terrific appearances in the sky, unseasonable tempests, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes,—and these signals of the end of the world precede it, that we may be found solicitous for our souls, looking for the hour of death, and prepared for the coming Judge."³

"The pestilence and sword ravage the world, nations rise against nations, the whole earth is shaking, the yawning ground is dissolved with its inhabitants; for all the events foretold are accomplished, the king of pride is present, and, what ought not to be, an army of priests is prepared for him."⁴ "Antichrist the enemy of the Almighty is nigh."⁵

¹ Gregorii Homil. i. tom. i. p. 1436, 1439.

² Gregorii Epist. 123, lib. ix.; Indict. 2, tom. ii. p. 1032.

³ Gregorii Ep. 66, lib. xi. Indict. 4, tom. ii. p. 1166. Many similar passages occur. Dialog. lib. iv. c. 41, p. 445; Epist. 29, lib. iii. Ind. xi. and E. 25, lib. iv. Ind. xii.

⁴ Gregorii Epist. 18, lib. v. Ind. xiii. p. 744. Epist. 29, lib. vii. Indict. xv. p. 875.

⁵ Gregorii Epist. 31, lib. vii. Indict. xv. p. 879.

Mr. Brightman, Mr. Daubuz, and Mr. Elliott regard the angel as symbolic, and interpret his voice, on the one hand, of theirs who, like *Vigilantius* in the preceding age, inveighed against the corruptions of the church, and on the other, of Pope Gregory's exhibition of the arrogation by the patriarch of Constantinople of the title of universal bishop, as a mark of the presence or approach of antichrist. But that is to confound the acknowledgment and proclamation of the apostasy of the church, with a forewarning of the calamities by which first the eastern empire was to be overwhelmed, and next the western governments and the man of sin. The warning was a warning of the calamities which were to be represented by the symbols of the trumpets that were about to be blown, and as the first two fell on the eastern empire, was a warning of judgments by which that empire was to be overthrown. It is under the last trumpet that antichrist is to fall.

Mr. Lowman, Bishop Newton, Dean Woodhouse, and Mr. Cuninghame, regard it as the angel's office to excite attention merely. *Vitringa* exhibits his cry as designed only to warn the church that the calamities of the last trumpets were to be far more severe than those of the first, which is to divest it of its symbolic character.

SECTION XXII.

CHAPTER IX. 1-12.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET.

AND the fifth angel sounded ; and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to the earth, and the key was given to him of the pit of the abyss. And he opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke ascended from the pit as smoke of a great furnace. And the sun was darkened and the air by the smoke of the pit. And from the smoke locusts went forth to the earth. And power was given to them as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was said to them, that they should not injure the grass of the earth, nor any thing green, nor any tree, but only the men who have not the seal of God on their foreheads. And it was given to them that they should not slay them, but that they should be tormented five months. And their torment was like torment from a scorpion should it strike a man. And in those days the men shall seek death, and they shall not find it, and

they shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the figures of the locusts [were] like horses prepared for battle, and on their heads [were] as crowns like gold, and their faces as faces of men, and they had hair as hair of women, and their teeth were as of lions. And they had breastplates as breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings [was] as the sound of many chariots of horses rushing to battle. And they had tails like scorpions, and stings were in their tails. And their power [is] to injure the men five months. They have over them a king, the angel of the abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name the Destroyer. The first woe is passed. Behold, there yet come two woes after these.

The meteor had fallen to the earth when first seen by the apostle. Its head, it would seem, was an intelligent being, to whom the key of a bottomless recess was given by its porter or prince. As the meteor which fell on the rivers and fountains denoted a vast army of Hunns, so this doubtless represents a body of armed men with a slaughtering and ruthless leader. As the former extended over a surface in which a third of the rivers of the empire had their origin, it indicated a proportional vastness of that Scythian host. But as the head of the latter was an individual, and bore doubtless a due proportion to its train, that may be regarded as an equally clear indication that it was of but moderate dimensions. He opened the dungeon gate, and out of the smoke which ascended and filled the atmosphere, locusts went forth to the earth,—agents of a different class, or having a different office from those constituting the meteor. Their figures were like horses caparisoned for battle. They had faces as of men, hair as of women, and teeth as of lions. They had on their heads as it were crowns like gold, and had breastplates as iron breastplates, and such was their innumerable multitude that the sound of their wings was like the sound of many chariots of horses rushing to battle. A power or nature was given to them like that of the scorpions of the earth, and they were directed not to injure the grass, crops, or trees, but only the men who had not the seal of God on their foreheads, and not by slaughter, but by a scorpion torment. They were to exercise their power during five months, the usual period of locusts, and in such a form as to render life to the tortured insupportable.

As the locusts had life, they were by the laws of symbolization representatives of intelligent beings; and as they were of both sexes, and propagated their kind, they were representatives of human beings, the only species of intelligences on earth of that nature, and a body embracing both sexes and all ages, as a swarm

of locusts embraces all the varieties of age, size, and nature that belong to that species; and a body obviously from the description of a usurping, crafty, sensual, voracious, and un pitying nature, that should go forth from their native seat into other lands, and be therefore a warlike and invading nation. That is indicated also by their vast numbers, and the great power they were to exercise as conquerors.

As they who have the seal of God on their foreheads are his true people, rendered visibly such, in contradistinction from apostates who sanction the usurpation of his rights by creatures, as is shown in the seventh and fourteenth chapters, the men who have not the seal of God on their foreheads, are apostates, who ascribe the prerogatives of God to creatures, and pay to them the homage that is due only to him.

What warrior host, then, uniting in itself these peculiar and terrible characters, appeared on the apocalyptic earth next after the fall of the western empire, and tortured through a long period an apostate church? An exact and conspicuous correspondence is presented by the Saracens. Mahomet and his small band of associates fled from Mecca to Medina, like a meteor that falls from the region where it is generated to the earth. He there received liberty to unfold and propagate his doctrines, and soon diffused them through Arabia; and they were a smoke from the abyss instead of an effulgence from the sun. He generated by them in his followers that locust disposition by which they were prompted to go forth from their native seat to other lands, gave them their scorpion power, enjoined it as their office to torture idolaters, and rendered them in that respect different from those who formed his meteor train, whose aim was to sustain him as a teacher merely, not like his scorpion hordes, to conquer other lands, torture apostates, and extend his sway as a king. It was not until after the promulgation of his first doctrines, the organization of his followers at Medina, and the generation of the first swarm of locusts, that he added the directions that respect their conquests.¹ All the subordinate characteristics were united in them also. Their crowns, their faces, their hair, their teeth, their breastplates, were symbolic of their dispositions, or the characteristics of their agency, rather than descriptive of their persons, and denoted traits by which the Saracens were most conspicuously marked, a daring pretence to right, cunning, effeminateness, voracity, and insensibility to the miseries of their victims. They fulfilled their office as torturers on the eastern

¹ Sale's Prelim. Discourse to the Koran, sect. 2, pp. 67, 68.

Roman empire chiefly. Mahomet remained their lawgiver and guide through their whole period, and they continued their scorpion career until they had run the usual course of conquerors, as locusts continue while life lasts to devour the grass and the trees. In like manner the nations, conquered or overrun by the Saracens, were such as the passage designates. The churches of Babylonia, Syria, Egypt, Asia Minor, Northern Africa, Spain, and the Mediterranean islands, had sanctioned the arrogation of the rights of God by civil and ecclesiastical rulers, turned to the open and zealous worship of relics, saints, and images, and sunk to the lowest depths of profligacy and debasement.

There is no other body of men in whom the conditions of the symbol meet. Grotius, Dr. Hammond, and Eichhorn interpret the locusts of the Zealots who spread slaughter and devastation through Judea a short time previous to the overthrow of Jerusalem. But they present none of the required correspondences. They were not only five centuries earlier than the period denoted by the symbol, but preceded near thirty years the date of the Revelation. They were not generated as were the locusts in a different land from that in which they exercised their cruelties, but were natives of Judea and Galilee. Those whom they tortured had not sanctioned the usurpations by the emperors of authority over the faith and worship of the church, but were unbelieving Jews. They were not united under a single chieftain, were not preceded by a smoke from the abyss, nor meteor head, nor did they continue their career through a period proportional to that which nations usually run from conquest to indolence and luxury, and from luxury to decay.

Mr. Brightman interprets the star both of Mahomet and the pope, and the locusts both of the Saracens and the Roman priests and monks. But it is wholly arbitrary and inconsistent with a certainty of meaning, to assume that the same symbol may denote two wholly distinct classes of agents and events. It is to set aside analogy to expound it as denoting classes of agents of different departments of life, one military, the other religious; one invading and devastating a foreign country, the other exerting their destructive influence only in their own.

Cocceius regarded the star as symbolizing the pope, and its dejection as denoting his fall from authority at the Reformation. But the fall of the star denotes the procedure of the agent whom it symbolizes to the scene of his agency, not his deprivation of power, nor the diminution of his influence. He also regarded the locusts as symbolizing the Romish clergy of that period.

But they exhibit none of the requisite analogies. They were not the offspring of a recent and peculiar smoke from the abyss. The darkness in which they were generated had long brooded over the Roman empire. Some of the monkish orders sprang indeed in a degree from a decrease of that darkness and a wish to remedy its intolerable evils, and were far less corrupt and pernicious in their agency at their origin, than after having risen to numbers, popularity, and wealth. They were not foreigners, but exerted their agency in the scenes of their birth and education. They were not hostile to the assumption of authority over the faith and worship of the church by civil and ecclesiastical rulers, nor to the homage of idols, nor were they torturers of those who had apostatized, but, instead, were the advocates of those usurpations, the votaries of relic and saint worship, and the patrons of idolatry. They were of but one sex. But when a species of creatures like locusts, embracing both sexes, is used as a symbol, analogy requires that the agents symbolized should also embrace both sexes, and that condition was peculiarly and conspicuously fulfilled in the Saracens, who were usually attended by many of their women and families in their warlike expeditions, and followed in their conquests by a crowd of emigrants, who hastened to grasp the wealth and enslave the persons of the vanquished.

There is a like want of correspondence in the Gnostics, to whom Dean Woodhouse refers the symbol. Their false doctrines were not originated by a single chief, but were invented by several persons, and at distant periods. They were not hostile to the worship of imaginary deities, but taught the existence of an infinite multitude, and proposed them as objects of homage. They were the first apostates, and authors of the first apostasy from the truths of the gospel, not torturers of those who had previously apostatized. They were not foreigners, but exercised their agency on those among whom they had their birth and education. They began their career in the first century, reached their largest diffusion ere the end of the second, and rapidly declined through the third;¹ but the period of this symbol is undoubtedly after the fall of the western empire in the fifth.

Vitringa interprets it of the northern nations who devastated Italy during the one hundred and fifty years from the invasion under Alaric to the capture of Rome by Totila. But they were not guided by a single chief. They were not generated by a smoke released by their leader from the bottomless abyss. They were not a new and peculiar species of warriors. The same nations

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 32.

had repeatedly invaded the empire before, and devastated the provinces on the Danube and the Rhine. The invasions of Italy during that period and overthrow of the western empire, are represented, as we have seen, by the symbols of the first four trumpets, and cannot, therefore, be supposed to be again indicated by this.

Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Whiston, Mr. Lowman, Bishop Newton, Mr. Faber, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Keith, Mr. Elliott, and others, unite in interpreting it of the Saracens, though they differ in their construction of its subordinate parts. Mr. Mede, Mr. Whiston, and Dean Woodhouse regard Satan as the star. But that is to make Mahomet one of the locusts instead of their king, and to exhibit him as generated in the smoke emitted from the pit, instead of the agent who gave egress to that smoke. Mr. Cuninghame interprets the star of the pope, and the smoke of the ignorance, error, superstition, and idolatry of the churches of the fifth and sixth centuries. But that is to confound the smoke in which the locusts were generated, with the crimes of those whom it was their office to torment. Apostasy to the homage of creatures was the characteristic of the men who had not the mark of God on their foreheads, and the reason of their subjection to the scorpion torture of the locusts. But the locusts themselves were not generated in that superstition and creature-homage. The Saracens were not apostates from Christianity, but generally at least, worshippers of the sun, moon, and stars;¹ nor was the system of Mahomet formed like that of the false prophet of Rome by a mere perversion of the gospel, or infusion into it of contradictory ingredients, but was wholly new, a sheer and independent fabrication, and designed to supersede alike paganism, Judaism, and Christianity.² His scheme was all drawn from the abyss, and employed in intercepting the sun, not in any degree like popery, in giving a new tinge and refraction to its rays, and exhibiting them as emanations from other objects.

It is to confound the region also where the smoke brooded, with the exterior earth to which the locusts proceeded on entering on their office of torture. That smoke was confined to the scene in which they were generated, not extended over the vast field of their conquests. While they remained in that scene they were hidden. It was not till they emerged from it, that they became visible. The denseness of the cloud from the abyss, denotes not only the utter erroneousness of his doctrine, but the absoluteness

¹ Sale's Prelim. Discourse, sect. i. p. 19-29.

² Ibid. s. 2, pp. 53, 54.

also with which it enveloped his followers, excluding every direct ray from heaven, and every refraction from surrounding objects ; a most conspicuous peculiarity of the disciples of Mahomet, who entertain no doubts whatever of the propriety of their own scheme, never modify it by the adoption of doctrines from others, nor admit the possibility of a higher degree of truth in any antagonist system.

Finally, the ignorance, the errors, the superstition, and the creature-worship of the eastern churches, which were the chief victims of the Saracen scourge, were not the offspring of the papacy, but originated with those churches themselves, and long anterior to the supremacy of the pope. No facts of history are more indisputable and conspicuous, than that the false doctrines, superstition, ambitious rivalries, and apostasy to creature-worship of the Egyptian, Syrian, and Greek churches, sprung up among themselves, and were transplanted thence to the western churches, not borrowed from earlier apostates of Italy. Gnosticism in all its numerous forms, the fabrication of false gospels and lying legends, the institution of new orders of ministers and a new government of the church, asceticism, monkery, Sabellianism, Arianism, Appollinarianism, Eutychianism, Eunomianism, all had their origin there, and spread thence to other regions ; and the homage of relics and martyrs, the adoration of the cross, the invocation of saints, the worship of idols, if not first introduced at the east, sprung up there at least as early and flourished as vigorously as at the west. Of all the infinite swarm indeed of doctrinal errorists of the first six centuries, Pelagius was the only one of importance who originated at the west, and he was opposed in a degree by the cotemporary popes, and many of the western clergy. Many of those errors and superstitions had prevailed for generations before the pope attained the rank of supreme bishop in the western kingdoms, and he never enjoyed a supremacy over the east. The patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, were co-ordinate with the patriarch of Rome, and ever jealous of his ambition.

The objections offered to this application of the symbol are founded on misapprehension. Dean Woodhouse deems it a proof that the being who received the key of the pit cannot have been Mahomet, that he was a star, which he regards as the symbol of a distinguished religious teacher ; and that he fell from heaven, which he imagines an indication of apostasy. But those assumptions are without authority. It is the office indeed of a fixed star to give light, but not of a meteor generated in the atmosphere,

which but gleams for a moment and then explodes and sinks to the earth. This star was of the latter kind, manifestly from the fact that it had fallen—not a sun of some other system, like the twinkling orbs that stud our evening sky; and its descent to the earth simply denotes its violent migration or dejection from its original station to a new scene of agency, precisely as the descent of the rain, hail, and lightning following the first trumpet, denotes a violent precipitation into the empire of the agents whom they represent; and the dejection of the meteor embittering the fountains and streams, the headlong rush from a distance of the destructive host which that body symbolized.

It is regarded by others as a proof that Mahomet is not among the agents denoted by the star, that he had not filled any conspicuous station either religious or civil, anterior to his assumption of the prophetic office and collection of a small band of disciples at Mecca. But no such previous rank was requisite to constitute him a meteor. He became such by the generation of his religious system, and gathered a train proportional to his own dimensions, by the conversion of the few relatives and associates who accompanied him on his ejection from Mecca. The descent of the meteor to the earth was a fit representative of his flight from that city to Medina. His opening the pit and emission of the smoke into the atmosphere, denote the promulgation of his doctrines at Medina; and its brooding on the surface and enveloping every object where it spread, the absoluteness with which his imposture took possession of the people and subjected them to his dominion.

Most commentators have regarded the five months or one hundred and fifty days during which the locusts were to exercise their power, as denoting one hundred and fifty years; and have perplexed themselves with endeavors to discern epochs in their history to verify that construction. That interpretation, however, is not according to analogy. The period was to bear such a proportion to the nature of a conquering nation, passing the usual course from success to luxury and from luxury to decay, as five months bear to the usual life of locusts. And that career the Saracens had actually run, anterior to the overthrow of their empire by the Turks. Nor is the period from which those interpreters date the one hundred and fifty years, in accordance with the symbol. The agency of the locusts commenced at their emergence from the smoke and flight to the adjacent earth, or first incursion into Syria in the year 629 or 630.¹ But those wri-

¹ Gibbon's Hist. chap. l.

ters refer the commencement of the five months to Mahomet's first assumption of the prophetic office in 612, anterior to the flight to Medina and the generation of the locusts. The long continuance of their empire, therefore, and the impossibility of measuring its chief periods by one hundred and fifty years, are no proofs, as Dean Woodhouse and others regard them, that the Saracens are not the agents denoted by the symbol.

It is also thought by Dean Woodhouse to be an objection to this application of the symbol, that the locusts were not to injure the grass, nor any thing green, nor the trees, but only the men who had not the seal of God on their foreheads. This he first assumes implies that none of the sealed were to suffer by their agency; next, that therefore their agency was to be of a nature which the sealed would naturally resist or escape, and thence that it must have been merely moral, not physical, like that of the Saracens, who slaughtered and tortured, without distinction of age, sex, rank, or character, whoever opposed their career. But those assumptions are unauthorized. That direction was doubtless descriptive not only of the character of those whom they were to torment, and of the policy they were to pursue towards them, but also of the pretences under which they were to veil the ambition from which their wars were to spring, and the cruel tyranny they were to exercise over those whom they conquered. Their apparent aims were to differ from those of ordinary warriors. They were not ostensibly to be prompted by desire of power, honor, wealth, or the gratification of passion, but were to profess themselves to be the special ministers of the Almighty, to represent it as their sole object to fulfil his will in the dissemination of a new religion he had revealed, and the extirpation of false worships, especially idolatry, and to make that the reason and justification of their unprovoked attacks, their cruel slaughters, and lawless devastations; but under those hypocritical and impious pretences, were to be at liberty to indulge their malignant and brutal passions without reserve. Such indisputably was the course they pursued. They carried on all their wars under the pretence of religion, but made their victories subserve, beyond almost any other nation in the long succession of Asiatic conquerors, a lawless appetite and merciless ferocity.

But the direction was undoubtedly prophetic also both of the character of those whom they were to torture, and of the policy they were to pursue towards them, and in each relation had a signal fulfilment in the career of the Saracens. The term "the

men" whom they were to injure, whatever application may be made of the symbol, cannot be supposed to denote only persons of mature age. If, as Dean Woodhouse assumes, the agents represented by the locusts were false teachers, their influence cannot have been limited to adults. It is impossible that what is publicly and promiscuously taught, should not be communicated to youth and children as well as to adults. Such notoriously was the diffusion of the Gnostic errors, which he regards as foreshown by the symbol. The phrase, the men that have not the mark of God on their foreheads, denotes therefore apostates promiscuously, without distinction of age, superstitious churches, communities, nations; and such churches and communities in contradistinction, not to individuals, but to churches of the opposite character. And such most conspicuously were the churches and nations overrun and tortured by the Saracens, through their long career. That was their prevalent character. The exceptions, if there were any, were but of individuals, and those undoubtedly very rare and very obscure. No churches probably ever existed that were more generally corrupt. That universality of the characteristic, therefore, is all that the verification of the prophecy requires. It was no violation of its meaning, if some few who were the true people of God shared in the miseries of the Saracen woe; or were among the victims of their swords.

SECTION XXIII.

CHAPTER IX. 13-21.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

AND the sixth angel sounded; and I heard one voice from the four horns of the golden altar which was before God, saying to the sixth angel who held the trumpet, Loose the four angels who have been bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed who had been prepared for the hour, and day, and month, and year, that they might slay a third of the men. And the number of the armies of the cavalry [was] two myriads of myriads. I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and they who sat on them, having breastplates, fiery, hyacinthine, and sulphurous. And the heads of the horses [were] as heads of lions, and from their mouth proceeded fire, and smoke, and sulphur. By those three plagues the third of the men were slain, by the fire,

and the smoke, and the sulphur, which proceeded from their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails ; for their tails [are] like serpents having heads, and with them they injure. And the rest of the men who were not slain by those plagues, changed not from the works of their hands, that they should not worship the demons, and the idols of gold and silver, and brass and stone, and wood, which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk, and they reformed not from their murders, nor from their sorceries, nor from their fornication, nor from their thefts.

The one voice from the four horns of the golden altar, was either a joint voice, formed by voices from the four horns uttering in harmony the command to loose the angels at the Euphrates ; or a similar voice uttering successively from each a command to loose one of the angels.

The golden altar was that on which incense was offered with the prayers of the saints, and was a symbol of the cross, the instrument of Christ's death, by which men have access to God, and obtain pardon and acceptance. The cry from the horns of that altar denoted accordingly a connection of the judgments those symbolized by the angels were to inflict, with the sacrifice of Christ, and doubtless that his honor as mediator required vindication, by an infliction of the avenging judgments which the symbol foreshows on those who had set him aside, and substituted others in his place. The Euphrates was doubtless visible to the apostle, and not improbably passed, or apparently beneath the station of the sixth angel. The four angels were leaders of bodies of men, and doubtless of four armies, that with their successors constituted the two myriads of myriads. The release of the angels from bonds at the Euphrates, simply denotes the removal of obstacles to their invasion of the apocalyptic earth. The analogy is drawn doubtless from the relations of the Euphrates to ancient Babylon, and the access which Cyrus and his troops gained to that idolatrous capital by the diversion of the river from its channel. Some barrier resembling that, not a mere indisposition, was to be removed in order to their incursion into the empire ; as is indicated by the representation that they had been prepared for the hour, and day, and month, and year. This is, indeed, usually regarded as denoting the period during which they were to exercise their office as slaughterers of the idolatrous ; but that is not the obvious import of the language, nor is the period it is deemed to express, the measure of their career. If the one voice was a similar voice uttered in succession from each of the four horns, and commanded an angel to

be loosed, it doubtless denotes that they were to be loosed successively.

The four angels that were loosed, were indisputably the leaders of the cavalry armies, anterior to their invasion of the empire, not their successors, who commanded the descendants of those armies in subsequent centuries, and after their conquests. Those successors were within the empire, not without; in possession of the territories they desired, not debarred from them, and needed therefore no release from restraint at the river Euphrates. It were solecistical indeed to speak of those who planned and led the invasions, as prepared for the agency of their successors through a period of many centuries. The preparation of the angels therefore for the hour, and day, and month, and year, was a preparation of the leaders to invade the empire the moment obstacles that had before been insuperable were removed, as Cyrus and his army entered Babylon the moment the diversion of the waters of the Euphrates allowed them to pass beneath the walls.

The breastplates of the horsemen, of the color of fire, hyacinth, and sulphur, denote their vehement and aggressive spirit, and disposition to slaughter and devastation. The horses, however, not the horsemen, were the agents of destruction. Their heads were as lions, and from their mouths issued fire, smoke, and sulphur, with which they slew the third of the men; for their power was in their mouth and in their tails. Their heads were the engines of death; their tails, which were like serpents having heads, the instruments of torture; and denote that they were to be terrific, irresistible, and most destructive assailants on the one hand, and to subject those who should escape slaughter to a horrible form of suffering on the other.

The nations whom they were to scourge with those plagues, were to be worshippers of demons and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood; and those of them who were to escape destruction, were to continue wholly unreformed, and be distinguished for atrocious crimes towards one another, as well as daring impiety towards God.

The chief characteristics of these symbolic agents thus are, that they originated without the apocalyptic earth, that they were warriors, that they formed four armies or divisions, that they with their descendants were innumerable, that they were to those whom they assailed what fire, and smoke, and sulphur are to those who are enveloped by them, that their invasion of the empire was the consequence of previous victories, or other events

immediately preceding, which gave the requisite power to the leaders, that they slaughtered immense multitudes, that they were serpents to those whom they allowed to survive, that the nations whom they invaded were apostates from Christianity to demon and idol worship, and that they remained unreformed by their sufferings. And all these characteristics meet in the Tartar tribes who invaded the eastern Roman empire from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. They came from without the apocalyptic earth; they were of four different races or divisions—the Seljukians, the Moguls under the successors of Gengis-Khan, the Ottomans, and the Moguls under Tamerlane. Their entrance into the empire was preceded by the conquest of intermediate enemies and other events, which gave the chiefs the requisite power. They and their descendants who have acted and are to act the part of slaughterers and tormentors through the whole period of the woe which they inflict, who are denoted by the two myriads of myriads, are innumerable in multitude. They were objects of terror beyond any other conquerors, alike to those whom they assailed and those whom they threatened; and, like burning whirlwinds, spread death and devastation through the scenes of their conquests. They tortured with a serpent-venom those whom they subjected to their dominion; and the nations whom they overrun were apostates to idolatry, and remained unreformed by their miseries.

And these peculiarities meet in those Tartar tribes alone. There have been no other invaders of the eastern empire since the Saracens, nor of the western since the Goths, according in any degree with the conditions of the symbol. And they alone verify the revelation made in a subsequent vision, that the second woe is to continue till near the time of the seventh trumpet. After the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses, the earthquake and the fall of the tenth of the city, it was announced, the second woe has passed, behold, the third woe comes quickly, and the seventh angel sounded. The agents of the second woe are undoubtedly therefore to continue their office till near the period of the seventh trumpet. It is equally obvious that the great agents symbolized in the vision of the tenth chapter and the latter part of the eleventh, belong also to the period of the second woe. They certainly precede the seventh trumpet. They as certainly follow the sixth. The angel who, descending, set his right foot on the sea and his left on the land, represents, it will be shown in the exposition of the tenth chapter, the Reformers of the sixteenth century. The slaughter of the witnesses, and

the earthquake, and fall of the tenth of the city, will be shown, in the explanation of the eleventh chapter, to be yet future. The agents of the second woe, then, commenced their agency a considerable period anterior to the Reformation, still exercise it, and are to continue through nearly the whole space that yet intervenes between us and the seventh trumpet. But no fact in history is more indisputable than that after the Goths in the west, and the Saracens in the east, no nation except the Mahometan Tartars invaded the Roman empire, and established a vast dominion that continues to the present time without a change of religion. The Tartar conquerors of Hungary in the ninth century who were pagans, cannot be regarded as denoted by the symbol, as besides a want of likeness in other respects, they became converts to Christianity. There is an absolute certainty therefore that the Mahometan Tartars are the race represented by the symbol.

The first horde were the Seljukians, who invaded the eastern empire about the middle of the eleventh century, under Togrul Beg. The events by which he was released from restraint, were doubtless his conquest of western Persia and Media, and nomination as temporal vicegerent over the Moslem world. He suddenly overrun with myriads of cavalry the frontier, from Taurus to Arzeroum, and spread it with blood and devastation. Alp Arslan his successor, soon renewed the invasion, conquered Armenia and Georgia, penetrated into Cappadocia and Phrygia, and scattered detachments over the whole of lesser Asia. His troops being subsequently driven back, he renewed the war, and recovered those provinces. His descendants, and others of the race, soon after extended their conquests, and established the kingdoms in the east of Persia and Syria, and Roum in lesser Asia, which they maintained through many generations, and made their sway a scorpion scourge to the idolatrous inhabitants. The Christians were allowed the exercise of their religion on the conditions of tribute and servitude, but were compelled to endure the scorn of the victors, to submit to the abuse of their priests and bishops, and to witness the apostasy of their brethren, the compulsory circumcision of many thousands of their children, and the subjection of many thousands to a debasing and hopeless slavery.¹

The second army was that of the Moguls who in the thirteenth century, after the conquest of Persia, passed the Euphrates, plun-

¹ Gibbon's Hist. chap. lvii.

dered and devastated Syria, subdued Armenia, Iconium, and Anatolia, and extinguished the Seljukian dynasty. Another army advancing to the west, devastated the country on both sides of the Danube, Thrace, Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia, Hungary, Austria, and spread them with the ruins of their cities and churches, and the bones of their inhabitants. This horde had been prepared for this invasion by vast conquests in the east.¹

The third were the Ottomans, who in the beginning of the fourteenth century conquered Bithynia, Lydia, Ionia, Thrace, Bulgaria, Servia, and in the following century Constantinople itself, and have maintained their empire to the present time. They were released from restraint on the one hand by the decay of the Mogul Khans, to whom they had been subject, and on the other by the dissensions and weakness of the Greeks.²

The last was that of the Moguls under Tamerlane, who in the beginning of the fifteenth century overrun Georgia, Syria, and Anatolia, and spread them with slaughter and desolation.³ He also had been prepared for this incursion by his previous victories and conquests.

Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, and Rosenmuller, interpret this symbol of the Roman armies which under Titus devastated Judea and captured Jerusalem; but they exhibit none of the requisite resemblances. They were not foreigners. They had not previously been excluded from Judea, but had held it as a province for generations. The Jews were not worshippers of creatures or idols. That period was many centuries too early. Their dominion was terminated by the conquests of the Saracens. It has never been renewed. They cannot therefore be the agents of the second woe who are to continue till near the seventh trumpet.

Cocceius interprets it of the wars of the Catholics under Ferdinand against the Protestants in the seventeenth century. But that is to reverse the symbol and exhibit idolaters as the inflictors of the evils it denotes, and true worshippers as the subjects of the judgment. The worshippers of idols are those who are slaughtered and tormented, not those who torment and slaughter.

Vitringa and Dean Woodhouse regard the Saracens as the first of the four hosts denoted by the symbol. But that is founded on the assumption that the Saracens were not the agents denoted by the locusts of the fifth trumpet, and is disproved also by the consideration that the public and legalized apostasy to idol-

¹ Gibbon's Hist. chap. lxiv.

² Ibid. chap. lxiv.

³ Ibid. chap. lxv.

worship which the agents of the second woe were to punish, took place chiefly after the Saracens entered on their career, and did not gain a full sanction in the eastern empire, until near the middle of the ninth century, when their power had begun to decline. But the apostasy which the Saracens were appointed to scourge, the impious homage of rulers, and the worship of relics, saints, and angels, commenced at the elevation of Constantine, and had become universal at the period of their first conquests. The great peculiarity of those who have the seal of God on their foreheads is, that they ascribe to God alone the right to appoint the faith, the worship, and the laws of his church, and resist and denounce the usurpation of that right by men: and the peculiar and contradistinguishing characteristic of those who have not that mark, is that they allow and uphold the arrogation of that right by civil and ecclesiastical rulers. As the latter had long prevailed in the church at the rise of the Saracens, the office to which they were assigned was doubtless that of torturing those who were guilty of that apostasy. There is no other power indeed to which that symbol can with the least probability be referred. On the other hand, as the worship of images was but partial at the rise of the Saracens, and did not reach its fullest prevalence in the eastern empire until two hundred years after their first conquests, the office of punishing that idolatry was doubtless assigned to the Turks who commenced their career after it had become universal.

Mr. Brightman, Dr. Cressner, Mr. Daubuz, and Mr. Cuninghame interpret it of the Ottomans exclusively. But that leaves the first two invasions, by which the idolatrous churches were chiefly scourged and destroyed, as well as the last, unnoticed, and cannot therefore be correct. It presents no correspondence of leaders and armies with the number of the angels. It is founded on the erroneous assumption that the third of the men denotes the men of the eastern empire. That term, however, as in other passages, denotes the proportion to be slain to the survivors, in the region over which the horsemen were to extend their ravages. That it cannot denote the territory of the eastern empire, the want of analogy shows, agents being representatives of agents only, not of mere space or inanimate matter. It is demonstrated also by the ravages themselves of the Ottomans, which were not confined to the limits of that empire at that period, which had become very narrow in Asia as well as Europe, but extended into Thrace, Bulgaria, Servia, and Hungary, over regions, parts of which were never embraced in the east-

ern empire, and others that had been wrested from the hands of the Romans many centuries.

That reference of the symbol is chosen also by some writers, on the assumption that the hour, day, month, and year, for which the angels had been prepared, are a measure of the period during which the horsemen were to fulfil their slaughtering office : but that is without authority from the language, is irreconcilable with the far longer period that has passed than that which they regard those terms as denoting, and is confuted by the representation in the eleventh chapter that the woe of the horsemen is to continue till near the seventh trumpet.

Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Whiston, Bishop Newton, Mr. Faber, Mr. Keith, Mr. Elliott, interpret the symbol of the Seljukian and Ottoman Turks only. But that is to leave two of the four incursions of the same Scythian race unnoticed. It is to lose the correspondence of leaders with the angels by whom they are symbolized. The four sultanies established by the Seljukians, which Mr. Mede regarded the angels as representing, were not established by four separate armies. They were consequents, not antecedents of their invasion ; and within their new empire, not in their ancient territory. That application is chosen also on the assumption, that the third part of the men denotes the eastern empire, which is to make agents the symbol of a territory, and is against analogy. It is held on the ground likewise that the restraint and release of the angels at the Euphrates, indicates that the agents denoted by them were to enter the empire by the passage of that river. Mr. Elliott, indeed, throughout his commentary, proceeds on the assumption that geographical references indicate the scene of the agency which the symbols with which they are connected denote ; and builds on it many of his constructions. It is however against analogy. It assumes that the symbol is of the same species as that which it represents ; or the symbolic scene as that in which the symbolized agents are to fulfil their office. It is, moreover, impossible to adhere to that assumption in the interpretation of many of the symbols. It implies that the scene of the agents denoted by the volcanic mountain of the second trumpet, is literally the sea ; of the star of the third, the fountains and streams ; of the stroke of the fourth, the sun, moon, and stars ; and of the meteor of the fifth, the gate of a bottomless abyss. The sea indeed, the rivers and fountains exhibited to the apostle, were undoubtedly those of the apocalyptic world ; but they were exhibited to him because they were the scene of the symbols, not

because they were to be the scene of the agencies which those symbols represent. The sixth angel accordingly, if stationed as is probable towards the Euphrates, was stationed there because that was to be the scene of the symbolic agents, not because the agents whom they represented were to pass that stream on their entrance into the empire. The symbol was chosen, I doubt not, because of the analogy between the event to be foreshown, and the conquest of Babylon, the ancient seat of idolatry, by the diversion of the river from its channel, which allowed Cyrus and his army to pass beneath the walls without obstruction.

SECTION XXIV.

CHAPTER X. 1-11.

THE RAINBOW ANGEL.

AND I saw another mighty angel descending from heaven, robed with a cloud, and the iris over his head: and his face [was] as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and having in his hand a little book opened. And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left on the land, and he cried with a loud voice as a lion roars. And when he had cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had spoken, I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying: Seal what the seven thunders spake, and write them not. And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land, lifted his right hand towards heaven and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the land and the things on it, and the sea and the things in it, that the time shall not be yet, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he can be ready to sound, and the mystery of God can be finished, as he announced the glad tidings to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven again spake to me and said, Go take the little book which is opened in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land. And I went to the angel asking him to give to me the little book. And he said to me, Take and eat it, and it shall embitter thy stomach, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey. And I took the little book from the hand of the angel, and ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet honey. And when I had eat it, my stomach was embittered. And he said to me, Thou must again prophesy before peoples, and nations, and tongues, and many kings.

It was announced immediately before the sixth angel sounded, that one woe had passed. The reason probably was that the agents of that woe were still in the scene, and were to continue, though in a different relation, and internix with the agents of the second woe. It is also announced immediately before the seventh trumpet, the second woe is passed, and for the like reason doubtless that its agents were still visible to the apostle, and were to continue, though in another relation, and share in the convulsions that followed the seventh trumpet. Accordingly when this new agent descended, the horsemen were still spread, it is to be assumed, over the principal scene of their former agency, but no longer as masters, but the subjects of a new conquering power.

The splendor of his form and aspect, denotes their conspicuity whom he represents, and the effulgence of the light they were to impart to the nations. As he set his right foot on the sea and his left on the land before uttering his message, it may indicate that some whom he symbolizes were to cross the ocean to distant isles and continents, and implies therefore that the agency which they were to exert, was to continue through a long period.

The seven thunders that followed the utterance of his message, denote violent expressions of thought and passion, by those whom the agents he represented were to address. They were seven thunder voices uttering an intelligible response to his message, as appears from the apostle's procedure to write, and the direction he received not to write what they had spoken. Their loudness denotes the vastness of the multitude by whom that which they symbolized was uttered. That the apostle was about to write it on the assumption that it was prophetic, may perhaps indicate that there were to be persons who would regard what they had spoken as inspired. The reason that it was not to be written, doubtless, was that it was not inspired, but merely expressive of their thoughts and affections who uttered it, of much thence that was mistaken and evil, and which therefore if written, would have led the reader and hearer of the Apocalypse to dangerous misconceptions. The solemn oath of the angel was a response to those thunder voices, designed obviously to correct an error which they had expressed in regard to the period when the empire of the saints was to be established on earth. The time shall not be yet, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he can proceed to sound, and the mystery of God can be finished, as he announced the glad tidings to his servants the prophets. It foreshows therefore that they who were to respond to their message whom the angel symbolized, were to

entertain an expectation of the immediate overthrow of antichrist and establishment of the Redeemer's millennial kingdom.

The appeal of the angel to the creator of all things for the truth of his asseveration, denotes that they whom he symbolized, unlike those who uttered the seven thunders, were to found their teachings respecting the commencement of that reign on the word of God alone, and make it the sole rule of their faith and ground of their hope. The mystery of God is his permission of the supremacy of the wild beast and false prophet over the church, during the twelve hundred and sixty years, or allowance of the triumph of antichrist through that long period, ere his descending to establish his kingdom in its glory.

In the reception of the open book, the apostle acted as a symbol. What the angel with the book was to him, such were those whom the angel symbolized, to persons whom the apostle represented. The delivery of the little book, denoted that they whom the angel personated, were to present an open volume to those to whom they should be sent as messengers. The apostle in receiving it, personated the recipients of that volume. His eating it with a sense of sweetness, foreshowed that they should receive and study it with eagerness and delight; and the bitterness it excited, symbolized inquietudes, aversions, animosities, and contests, of which it was to prove to them the occasion. And the announcement that he must again prophesy before peoples and nations, and tongues, and many kings, that they were still to fulfil the office of witnesses for God, in the presence of antichristian rulers and nations.

That this prediction and the direction to take and eat the book, were addressed to the apostle as a representative, their utterance by the symbolic, not by the interpreting angel or a voice from heaven, renders indisputable. As the cloud-robed angel was a symbol, and a part of his office was the delivery of an open book, the object of his address and action in that delivery, as well as the action itself, was symbolic. Otherwise there were no analogy between the representative agent and the objects and effects of his agency. It is as contradictory to the law of symbolization, to assume that the object and effect of a symbolic action are not symbolic, as it is to assume that the agent is not a symbol. It is as contradictory to that law also, to assume that the symbolic object and effect are of the same species as those which they represent, as a like assumption is in regard to the symbolic and symbolized agent. To assign therefore any other than a representative character to the apostle in his reception of those ad

dresses and the book, is to set aside the whole spectacle as a symbolization, and the whole series of visions, reject the laws of construction which its nature demands, and convert it into a chaos of unintelligibility.

To prophesy as witnesses is, as is shown in the next chapter, to assert and proclaim the rights of God and the doctrines of his word in opposition to the blasphemous usurpations of the wild beast, and impious teachings of the false prophet. The wild beast is the agent it is shown also by which they were to be slain whom the apostle personated, and who were still to prophesy before peoples, and nations, and tongues, and many kings.

The rainbow angel then, like other symbolic actors, was the representative of a class and succession of agents of great conspicuity and influence, who were to enter on the apocalyptic scene during the period that was to intervene between the invasion of the empire by the last Turkish army, and the termination of the second woe. Those agents were to be men, religious teachers, and witnesses for God, manifestly from the relation of the responses which their message was to excite and the answering oath of the angel, to the period of the advent of the Son of God, to the mysteries of his administration, and to the glad tidings respecting it made known to the ancient prophets. Their message was to excite vast multitudes to loud and violent expressions of thought and passion, involving false pretences to inspiration, and an error in regard to the period of Christ's second advent, or the destruction of the antichristian powers. They were to respond to that expression by appealing to the word of God as the only guide of faith, and proclaiming its teachings, that that advent was not yet to take place, but at the sound of the seventh trumpet when the mystery of God is finished, as was foreshown to his servants the prophets. They were to deliver to those to whom they were to address their message, an open volume, which their hearers were to receive and study with eagerness and pleasure, but from which acidities, agitation, and violences of passion were to spring, analogous to the bitterness excited by the little book in the apostle; and they, their hearers, and their followers, were to fulfil the office of witnesses for God, in opposition to the wild beast.

These characteristics point us most obviously to the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and their followers, as their counterpart. All the peculiarities meet in them, and in them alone. They were as conspicuous to the men of that age and invested with as dazzling a splendor, as a gigantic angel could have been descending from heaven, robed in a cloud, and crowned with the brilliance of

a rainbow. They uttered their message with a lion voice that resounded through all the valleys of Europe, echoed from her remotest mountains, and struck their foes with a terror like that with which the onset of that monarch of beasts strikes its victims. Their voice drew from innumerable multitudes of the nations of Europe instantaneous and passionate expressions of thought and feeling, that shook the ecclesiastical and civil governments to their foundations, as loud thunders shake the dome of heaven. One of the first and most violent of those thunder utterances was a false pretence to inspiration, and expression of the persuasion that the period had arrived of the final overthrow of antichrist and establishment of the Redeemer's millennial kingdom. That expression prompted the Reformers and their successors to correct the error by an appeal to the Scriptures, and demonstration that the advent of Christ is not to take place until the sound of the seventh trumpet, and the close of the period of the wild beast, as was foreshown to the ancient prophets, Daniel and Zechariah, to the apostles by Christ, and to the churches by the apostles. They delivered to their followers the word of God, opened to their perusal by translation into their several languages, and easy and cheap multiplication through the art of printing, and like the angel enjoined them as an imperative duty and inestimable privilege to receive and study it as his, and the only authoritative revelation of his will. The Scriptures were received and studied by their followers with the utmost eagerness and delight, but diversities of opinion, alienations, contentions, and intolerances, soon sprung from the study of them, that distracted the Protestant churches, and filled them with confusion and misery. The Reformed teachers fulfilled, and their successors have continued in a degree through every subsequent age, to fulfil the office of witnesses for God, in opposition to the usurpations of the wild beast and errors of the false prophet; and they are still to sustain that office, as is shown in the following chapters, till the mystery of God is finished.

All these characters meet in them so eminently and so notoriously, as to leave it scarcely necessary to verify the application by references to history. Luther commenced the Reformation in 1517, one hundred years after the invasion of the eastern empire by Tamerlane, and sixty-four after the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks, but near one hundred before they reached the acme of their power, and relinquished the endeavor and hope to extend their empire over a larger space of eastern Europe. During that whole period they were objects of su-

preme terror to both the Catholic and Protestant worlds. The attack on the papacy by Luther, Zuinglius, and their associates, and proclamation in opposition to the false doctrines and impious superstitions of the Romish church of the great truths of the gospel, instantly produced a thunder explosion of passion from the people throughout Germany and Switzerland, and subsequently the other nations of Europe.

I. Of those multitudes there were many, especially in Germany, who not only anticipated the speedy overthrow of antichrist and the establishment of the empire of the saints, but assumed the office of prophets, predicted the immediate fall of the apostate church, and claimed for their announcement the authority of inspiration.

“A body of persons secretly sprung up at this period, 1522, who asserted that they had communications from God, and had received a command to slay all the wicked and constitute a new world, in which the pious only and innocent should live and rule. They disseminated their doctrine clandestinely in that part of Saxony chiefly which borders the river Sale, and even Carlostadt, according to Luther’s representation, approved of their opinions; for being unable from Luther’s influence to effect his wishes at Wittemberg, he left his station there and joined these.”¹

“In November, 1524, the peasants in several parts of Germany engaged in seditions, and in the spring of 1525 vast bodies rose, especially on the borders of the Danube, and made war on the papal ecclesiastics, partly in order to gain greater civil, and partly in order to religious freedom.”² “This contest was excited in a degree by a class of rash preachers of whom the principal was Thomas Muncer, who abandoning the gospel, proposed a new doctrine. He assailed not only the Roman pontiff, but Luther also, and denounced their doctrines as alike defective and corrupt, asserting that the pontiff chained the minds of men by too severe laws, and that Luther unloosed those chains indeed, but granted too great indulgence, and neglected to teach the things of the Spirit; that if we would gain salvation we must not only abstain from all flagitious crimes, but chasten and macerate the body by fasting, look grave, be taciturn, and wear a long beard. These and other things of the kind he called the cross, the mortification of the flesh, and discipline. Having prepared his followers by these instructions, he then directed each to retire from the crowd, and meditate on God, considering what he is, whether he exercises a providence over us, whether Christ died for us,

¹ Sleidani Comment. de statu. Relig. lib. iii. f. 47.

² Ibid. lib. iv. f. 66, 68, 69.

and whether our religion is preferable to that of the Turks ; and to ask God to testify by a sign that we are the objects of his care, and are in the way of the true religion, and if he should not immediately grant a signal, to persist nevertheless and with the utmost urgency in prayer, and even seriously expostulate with him as unjust in not yielding an answer ; that as the Scriptures represent him as willing to give whatever is asked, it would not be just should he grant no sign to one who prayed for a true knowledge of him ; and such expostulation and anger he said were extremely grateful to God, as he saw from them their disposition towards him and earnestness ; and there was no doubt but that being importuned in that manner, he would declare himself by some conspicuous signal, slake their thirst, and act with them as he formerly did with the patriarchs. He taught also that God manifested his will by dreams, made them the great instrument of his schemes, and when he succeeded in interpreting one, boasted of it in his public addresses. When he had in this manner induced a large number to join him, he began to enrol those who promised him assistance in his attempt to slay the ungodly and institute a new magistracy, asserting that he had a commission from God to destroy the old rulers and establish new ; collected a vast crowd of followers half armed and without discipline to accomplish his purposes, and perished and a vast body of his adherents in the attempt."¹

At the distance of ten years a party of similar fanatics again organized under Cnipperdoling who claimed prophetic gifts, was constituted their king, and asserted that the kingdom of Christ was to be like his till the day of judgment, in order that the wicked being wholly destroyed, the pious and elect might reign. He taught that it was lawful for the people to abolish their magistracies ; that although the apostles were not commanded to assume a civil jurisdiction, yet the present ministers of the church ought to take the sword and by force constitute a new republic ;² that this was the time in which all the prophets had foreshown that righteousness was to prevail throughout the world ; the time in which Christ had said the meek should possess the earth.³

¹ Sleidani Comment. lib. v. f. 71-74.

² Ibid. lib. x. f. 152.

³ Ibid. Ranke presents the same representation. "In 1521 a sect congregated around a fanatical weaver named Claus Storck, that professed the most extravagant doctrines. Luther did not go near far enough for them. Very different men they said, and of a much more elevated spirit were required ; for what could such servile observance of the Bible avail. That book was insufficient for man's instruction ; he could only be taught by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Their fanaticism soon rose to such a pitch as to convince them that this was actually grant-

II. That misapprehension the Reformers and their successors endeavored to counteract by an appeal to the word of God as the only revelation of his purposes, and exposition of the prophecies respecting the conflicts of the church with antichrist, and the advent of the Redeemer, which show that the persecuting powers are not to be overthrown until the times of the gentiles reach their end, the judgment of the wild beast is set, and the period of the seventh trumpet arrives.

Thus Luther immediately opposed these fanatics, pointed out their errors, and endeavored to recall them from their presumptuous schemes. He notified the magistrates of Mulhausen, into which Muncer was designing to introduce himself and his party, that he regarded him as a seditious person who thought of nothing but violence and robbery, that his plans were known, and that he ought therefore to be carefully watched, and not allowed to enter their city; and apprized them that if they rejected his counsel, and afterwards became involved in difficulties, he, having so carefully forewarned them, should be blameless. He recommended them to ask him who called him to the office which he assumed, and should he pretend to have been appointed by God, to require him to demonstrate his vocation by some evident sign, and if he declined, to reject him.¹ And as the agitation spread through Germany, and indications appeared of a tumult, he published a book in which he warned all to abstain from sedition; and stated that although terrific mobs seemed to endanger the Roman ecclesiastics, yet in his judgment they were not to overturn their power; the calamities that were threatened to be inflicted on them were of a far different nature; Daniel and Paul had foretold that their tyranny was to be overthrown, not by the hand of man, but by the advent of Christ, and by the Holy Spirit. All endeavors therefore to conquer them by arms would prove vain; the only method of overcoming them was to expose their crimes and preach the gospel. If that were faithfully continued their kingdom would soon fall, or if any portion

ed to them; that God spake to them in person, and dictated to them how to act, and what to preach. On the strength of this immediate inspiration, they pressed for various alterations in the service of the church." "They asserted that the world was threatened with a general devastation, of which the Turks were, perhaps, to be the instruments. No priest was to remain alive, nor any ungodly man; but after this bloody purification the kingdom of God would commence, and there would be one faith and one baptism."—*Hist. Reformation*, vol. ii. pp. 22, 23. He goes on to relate that they were inclined to begin that work themselves, and collected arms with the design of assaulting and slaughtering their opponents, but were intercepted and dispersed. See also vol. ii. chap. vi.

¹ Sleidani Comment. lib. v. f. 74.

should not be overturned by that means, it would be extinguished at the advent of Christ.¹ He held that there was to be no sudden extermination of error, but instead a long and strenuous conflict, in which no means were authorized or could prove successful but those of the gospel. "We are neither able to hurl the pontiff from his station, nor will the truth ever be safe while the papacy survives." "We have no right to introduce or tolerate any thing in the church except what can be sustained by the word of God."²

His comments on the second Psalm abound with similar representations. "In our time the success of the gospel at first was great, and all like the apostles before being taught by the Spirit respecting the kingdom of Christ, hoped that the inculcation of its precepts would bring political liberty and peace. But when Muncer, who was animated by a seditious spirit, began to excite tumults, and afterwards the church was distracted by Carlostadt, Cinglius, and other fanatical teachers, it came to be understood that it is in accordance with the representation of the Scriptures, that distractions take place in it, and seditions in the state, and that the saints are marked by great infirmities; and it was felt that the only safety lay in not hoping for safety amidst such pressing dangers. Many, however, then became discouraged, recoiled, and even turned to a hatred of the gospel."

"But the sole reason of this error was, that they were not aware that the nature of Christ's kingdom is such, that it is naturally assailed on every hand by Satan and the world. Being ignorant of this, they yield to danger, and condemn the gospel as the cause of seditions. The Psalmist therefore to guard them against this misapprehension, here paints the kingdom of Christ according to its varying circumstances, and teaches that it is to have numerous and powerful enemies."³

He goes on through the exposition to show that a perpetual warfare is to be maintained with foes, and that they are to be

¹ Nam longè aliam ipsis impendere calamitatem, et fore quod post Danielem Paulus etiam prænuntiavit, ut ipsorum tyrannis nulla vi humana, sed adventu Christi servatoris et Spiritu Dei corruat. Hoc suæ sententiæ esse fundamentum.—Sleidani Comment. lib. v. fol. 74. Postremo celebrandam esse doctrinam evangelii, et pontificum imposturas orbi terrarum patefaciendas, ut detectis erroribus et agnita veritate, homines pro nihilo ducant et plane contemnant quicquid ab illis profectum fuerit.—F. 75.

² Nec enim nos pontificem loco deturbare possumus, neque vera doctrina, salvo pontificatu, incolumis esse potest. . . . Nec enim est arbitrii nostri statuere vel tolerare aliquid in ecclesia quod verbo Dei defendi non potest.—Sleidani Comment. lib. vii. f. 115.

³ Lutheri Op. tom. iv. f. 735.

overcome by the Spirit of God, by prayer, faith, watchfulness, and the word of the gospel. Such are his representations also in his comment on Joel, in which he teaches that the gifts bestowed by the Spirit, are bestowed through the written word, not through new revelations; that the acts to which he excites are faith, a warfare against sin, self-denial, and universal obedience to the gospel; and that the written word is the sole instrument through which God deigns to awaken and enlighten men, and finally turn them from thoughtlessness to fear, and from fear to comfort through the sacrifice of Christ, and a hope that neither dangers nor death itself can shake.¹

The pretences of the Anabaptists to inspiration were in like manner denounced by Melancthon. "The Anabaptists infatuated by the devil have boasted of a new species of sanctity, as though they had left the earth, and ascended to the skies; and given out moreover that they enjoy extraordinary inspiration. But as the pretence was hypocritical, and designed merely to subserve appetite and ambition, they soon plunged into debauchery, and then excited seditions, and undertook to establish a new Jerusalem, as other enthusiasts have often attempted. A like tragedy was formerly acted at Pepuza in Phrygia, which fanatical prophets denominated the New Jerusalem."²

He taught also that the pious in place of a sudden deliverance from trial, and exemption from annoyance by enemies, were still to suffer affliction, and be pursued as in all former ages by vindictive foes. He regarded it as a settled law of the divine administration that the church was to be subjected to the cross. "Such has often been the aspect of the church. We must not distrust God, if in this last age we see it severely shaken, but remember that by his wonderful counsel it is to be subjected to the cross."³

He also refuted by the Scriptures the expectation of the Anabaptists of the immediate establishment of Christ's millennial kingdom. He regarded the term antichrist as denoting both the Mahometan empire and the papacy, and held that they were not to be overthrown till the time of the resurrection of the dead, and that a considerable period was to pass before that event. "God showed to Daniel a series of monarchies and kingdoms which it is certain has already run to the end. Four monarchies have passed away. The cruel kingdom of the Turks which arose out of the fourth, still remains, which as it is not to equal the

¹ Lutheri Op. tom. iv. f. 789.

² Melancthoui Op. tom. iv. p. 411.

³ Ibid. tom. ii. p. 446.

Roman in power, and has certainly therefore already nearly reached its height, must soon decline, and then will dawn the day in which the dead shall be recalled to life." He then repeats the saying ascribed to Elias, that six thousand years were to pass before the advent of Christ; two thousand before the law, two under the law, and two under the gospel: and proceeds to show that four hundred and fifty-eight years were therefore to intervene before the advent of the Redeemer, the destruction of antichrist, and the establishment of the kingdom of the saints. "It is known that Christ was born about the end of the fourth millenary, and one thousand five hundred and forty-two years have since revolved. We are not therefore far from the end. Daniel asked in respect to the time of the end, and a number was given which, although it seems to respect the time of the Maccabees, yet undoubtedly has a reference to the end of the world, and the application is easy, if days be taken for years. They will be two thousand six hundred and twenty-five. We do not endeavor to ascertain the moment when the last day is to dawn. That is not to be sought. But inasmuch as this number happily agrees with the words of Elias, I regard it as denoting the years through which the world was to subsist from the time of Daniel. There were six hundred, or near that, from Daniel to the birth of Christ. There remained therefore two thousand years as the last age of the world."¹

Luther also founded his Supputation of times on the saying of Elias, that the world was to continue seven thousand years, and regarded the sixth thousand as having commenced with the eleventh century, and as therefore little more than half passed at his publication of that work in 1545.²

Flacius in his Catalogue of Witnesses, represented the twelve hundred and sixty days of the wild beast as having commenced in 606, and consequently referred its destruction and the advent of Christ to the year 1866.³

These views corresponding so conspicuously with the symbol, continued to be repeated by a crowd of writers, till at the distance of sixty-seven years from the death of Melancthon, the celebrated Joseph Mede published his *Clavis Apocalyptica*, in which he showed from the coincidence of the periods of the

¹ Melancthoni Op. tom. ii. p. 525.

² Lutheri Op. tom. iv. f. 730. See also Confess. August. c. 17. "Damnamus Anabaptistas qui nunc Judaicas opiniones spargunt, fingunt ante resurrectionem pios regna mundi occupaturos esse, ubique deletis aut oppressis impiis."

³ Bellarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. iii. c. 3, pp. 710, 711.

wild beast and the witnesses, that the advent of the Redeemer, and destruction of the antichristian powers were not to be expected until twelve hundred and sixty years had passed from the rise of the ten kingdoms, and that near one hundred of them therefore were still to revolve. As that period expired, and the knowledge of the prophecy advanced, the catastrophe of the wild beast was referred to a later time. Many recent expositors regard the twelve hundred and sixty years as having reached their end in 1792; and most refer the fall of the antichristian powers to the last half of the present, or the beginning of the next century.

III. The Scriptures, which the Catholic clergy had for ages almost wholly withheld from the people, the Reformers translated, and presented to the nations of Europe, and enjoined the reception and study of them as the only revelation from God, and the only authoritative rule of faith.

Luther published his translation of the New Testament in September, 1522. Tindal's English translation of the New Testament was published in 1526; Coverdale's of the whole Scriptures in 1535; Mathews' Bible in 1537, and Cranmer's in 1539. A Latin translation of the Bible was printed in Italy in 1527; an Italian of the New Testament in 1530, and of the whole Scriptures in 1532. Several others also soon followed. A French translation was published soon after the Reformation, and in 1543 the New Testament, and in 1553 the whole Scriptures in Spanish. They were translated also into Portuguese, Danish, and Swedish, and placed throughout the Protestant nations in the hands of all classes.

IV. Yet diversities of opinion, bitternesses, and violent and rancorous contentions, have been among the most conspicuous of the consequences that have sprung from the enjoyment of that gift, and the freedom of opinion to which the Reformation gave birth.

Dr. Mosheim says of the Lutheran divines of the sixteenth century, "The spirit of zeal that animated them was, generally speaking, very far from being tempered by a spirit of charity. If we except Melancthon, in whom a predominant mildness and sweetness of natural temper triumphed over the contagious ferocity of the times, all the disputants of this century discovered too much bitterness and animosity in their transactions and in their writings. Luther himself appears at the head of this sanguine tribe, whom he far surpassed in invective and abuse, treating his adversaries with the most brutal asperity, and sparing

neither rank nor condition, however elevated or respectable they might be."¹ Of those of the next century he gives a similar character. "The Lutheran church was involved in the most lamentable commotions and tumults during the whole course of this century, partly by the controversies that arose among its most eminent doctors, and partly by the intemperate zeal of violent reformers, the fanatical predictions of pretended prophets, and the rash measures of innovators, who studiously spread among the people new, singular, and for the most part extravagant opinions."²

The first of these dissensions was that commenced in 1522 by the fanatical pretenders to inspiration, with Carlostadt at their head; who by their wild and preposterous doctrines exposed the Reformation to imminent jeopardy. They denounced all learning, set aside the Scriptures in a great degree, relied on the immediate aid of the Spirit for teaching and guidance, and endeavored to excite the multitude to take arms and destroy their opponents by violence. This delirious scheme was instantly met by Luther, its falsehood and folly exposed, and all but the lowest rabble restrained from yielding it countenance.³

The next, the most passionate and the most disastrous of their controversies, commenced in 1523 respecting the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are present in the eucharist, agitated the whole Protestant church through a long period, and was marked by a violence, acerbity, and abusiveness that have seldom been equalled in the annals of religious contention.⁴

Schwenckfeldt, a mystic and enthusiast, soon after rose, and excited great disturbances and contentions respecting the eucharist, the efficacy of the divine word, and the nature of Christ. His views were considered so false and dangerous, that they were expressly condemned in the Form of Concord published in 1576.⁵

In 1538 a fresh contention was excited by a party, who were accused of denying the obligations of the moral law, and justifying their unscrupulous gratification of the sensual and malignant passions. A far more bitter and mischievous discussion arose after the death of Luther, in respect to the edict denominated the Interim, which divided the church for many years, and greatly obstructed the progress of the Reformation. "The de-

¹ Mosheim, *Hist. Ch.* vol. iii. p. 223.

² *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 28.

³ Ranke's *Hist. Reform.* vol. ii. p. 21-39.

⁴ Mosheim, *Hist. Church*, vol. iii. p. 48-57.

⁵ Walshii *Introd. ad Symb.* p. 886-899.

fenders of the primitive doctrines of Lutheranism, with Flacius at their head, attacked with incredible bitterness and fury the doctors of Wittenburg and Leipsic, and particularly Melancthon, and accused them of apostasy from religion; while Melancthon, on the other hand, seconded by the zeal of his friends and disciples, justified his conduct with the utmost spirit and vigor.¹

That controversy gave birth to several others respecting the necessity of good works, the mode of the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, the divine image, repentance and justification, that distracted the Lutheran churches for a long series of years, and were marked by the utmost rancor of intolerance, vituperation, and malignity.

The death of Melancthon in 1560, was followed by disputes of equal vehemence respecting the doctrines of Calvin, and those succeeded by others occasioned by endeavors to allay the violence of contention and re-excite a spirit of piety, that inflamed and devoured the church the whole of the following century.²

The Reformed churches of Switzerland, France, and Holland, were agitated by nearly equal contentions with one another and with the Lutherans during the sixteenth century respecting the eucharist, predestination, the deity of Christ, and grace; and in the following were rent by Arminius into two great parties which have continued to war with each other almost without intermission to the present day.³

The British isles also have been the scene of fierce and rancorous contention from the dawn of the Reformation, two parties having at every period divided the established church—a papal and a protestant, a high and low church, or a formal and an evangelical—that have carried on a ceaseless and violent conflict; while the dissentients from the days of Elizabeth have been distributed into numerous parties in respect to doctrine, rites, and government, and wasted a large share of their labor and zeal in intemperate accusations of each other, reproaches, and strifes.

These hostile dispositions and quarrels were carried to such an extreme through a hundred and fifty years, that they became a most important element in the politics of Europe. While they

¹ Mosheim, Hist. Church, vol. iii. p. 234.

² Mosheim, Hist. Church, vol. iv. chap. i.

³ "The Lutherans and Calvinists stood opposed to each other with a feeling of mutual hatred." "But the Calvinists, or as they are called in Germany, the Reformed Church, were also divided among themselves. Episcopalians and Puritans, Arminians and Gomarists, attacked each other with the fiercest hate, and in the assembly of the Huguenots at Saumur in 1611, a schism broke out which was never radically healed." Ranke's Reformation, vol. ii. p. 453, 454.

alienated the Protestant nations from each other, they induced the Catholics to unite in assailing them, and in several instances placed both the Lutheran and the Reformed churches in imminent danger of extinction.

V. Many of them and their followers fulfilled the office of witnesses for God, in opposition to the wild beast and false prophet.

Luther himself was called in 1521 to testify for God in the presence of Charles V. and the great princes of the empire at Worms, where he openly proclaimed his rejection of all rules of faith and guides in religion except the word of God, reasserted the accusations he had uttered of the pope and his followers, and avowed his purpose inflexibly to maintain the truth of God whatever opposition from princes or people he might be called to encounter;¹ and being condemned, and all his adherents, by an edict of the emperor, his writings and those of his followers sentenced to be burned, and a censorship of the press established that no similar works might thereafter appear,² was placed and his whole party in a relation to the princes and people by which all their proclamations of the Gospel thereafter were made a formal testimony for God in opposition to the antichristian powers; and great numbers were called almost immediately to confirm their testimony with their blood.³

The office of witnesses for the truth was in the year 1529 assumed at the Diet of Spire by the whole body of princes who favored the preaching of the gospel, by a public protestation against the edict of that diet which prohibited all further innovations in religion, required the evangelical to conform their instructions to the doctrines of the Catholic church, and denounced the penalties of proscription and death on those who should violate its injunctions. From that great act they drew the name by which they and their followers have ever since been distinguished of Protestants, which is descriptive of the office ascribed to them in this passage, of public witnesses against the false doctrines of the papacy, and impious usurpations of the civil powers.

The office was again fulfilled by Luther, Melancthon, and the Protestant princes, in a still more emphatic manner at the diet

¹ "Since, great Cæsar and illustrious princes, you require a specific answer; this is my decision. Unless I am convinced by proofs from the sacred writings or evident reason, I cannot recall any thing that I have written, or taught, for I cannot do what would wound my conscience. On the other hand, I have no faith in the Roman pontiff and mere councils, and do not regard them as of authority, for they have frequently erred and contradicted themselves in their decrees, and are liable to misjudge and be deceived." Sleidani Comment. lib. iii. f. 41.

² Ranke's Hist. Reform. vol. i. p. 544.

³ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 261.

of Augsburg in the year 1530, by the delivery to the emperor and princes of the Confession of their faith, in which they avowed on the one hand the great doctrines of the gospel, and rejected on the other the usurpations, errors, and superstitions of the apostate church. The like office was fulfilled also at the same time by the Protestants of Strasburg, Constance, Meminger, and Lindau, and by Zuinglius, by the presentation to the diet of their Confessions, in which they avowed the evangelical system, and renounced the errors and jurisdiction of Rome.¹

The Augsburg Confession, enlarged and in some degree varied, was again presented to the emperor in 1540.

The ministers of the churches of Saxony presented the Confession of their faith to the council of Trent. The Belgic churches published theirs in 1561, "that it might be known what their doctrines were who, in Flanders, Artesia, and Hannonia, had suffered, like the Protestants of France, the most violent persecution from the year 1525."² The Protestants of France presented theirs to the king and princes of that kingdom at the conference of Poisy in 1561. The ministers of many of the Helvetic churches drew up a confession of their faith in 1536, and in 1566 they generally united in addressing it to the Protestants of Germany for the purpose of making known their views of the gospel, and testifying against the false doctrines and usurpations of Rome.³

The whole body of the Protestants on the continent were thus brought, in their relations to the civil governments and in the presence of kings, to fulfil the office of witnesses for God, by a public avowal of the great doctrines of the gospel, and renunciation of the usurped dominion, false teachings, and idolatrous worship of the antichristian church.

The same office was fulfilled also by a vast body of Protestants in England and Scotland, who delivered a testimony to the great truths of the divine word in the presence of persecuting princes and a hostile people, maintained a contest for the truth through a century and a half of persecution, and sealed in numerous instances their profession with their blood.

And finally, as the wild beast still continues his usurpation of the rights of God and tyranny over the church, so many of the witnesses for God are still fulfilling their office by testifying against that usurpation, and are to continue their testimony until his seal is set on the foreheads of his servants, and they also who

¹ Sleidani Com. lib. vii. f. 106, 107.

² Syll. Confess. p. xviii.

³ Ibid. p. xiv-xvii.

after that period still linger among the apostates, are withdrawn from great Babylon.

And these characters meet in the Reformers and their successors alone. The asseveration of the angel shows that the gospel was to be the theme of which those whom he symbolized were to treat. But since the conquest of Constantinople, or the period of Tamerlane's invasion, there has been no violent and general excitement respecting the doctrines of the gospel answering at all to the representations of the symbol, except that of the Reformation; an excitement, the authors of which were most conspicuous, illustrious, and mighty; its subjects prompted in vast multitudes to free and impassioned utterances of opinions and expectations, and that were essentially erroneous in respect to the overthrow of the wild beast and advent of the Redeemer; which led to the delivery to them of a volume of such supreme interest as to be eagerly received and studied by them universally, whatever their language; which gave birth among them to bitter passions and contentions; and yet whose doctrines many of them faithfully taught and maintained in opposition to usurping civil rulers and ecclesiastics, and amidst the trials of oppression by those apostate powers, persecution, and slaughter. Nothing that occurred in the Romish church betwixt the fall of Constantinople and the ministry of Luther; nothing that has taken place in that church independently of the Reformation since that event, has the slightest claims to be regarded as the counterpart to the symbol. The Reformation is the only great movement of the kind, not only during the last four hundred years, but in the career of the church, and has been the cause of all the subordinate excitements and revolutions that have followed it, alike in the Protestant and the Catholic communions.

Interpreters have varied greatly in their views both of the nature of this symbol, and the events which it foreshows, and have fallen generally into errors that misled them in the construction of the chapters that immediately follow. Grotius and Rosenmuller exhibit the angel as representing Christ. But that is against the law of symbolization, there being no analogy between a creature and the Creator. Others, as Mr. Brightman, Mr. Jurieu, Mr. Whiston, Cocceius, Mr. Cuninghame, and Mr. Elliott, regard the angel as Christ himself, which is equally against the law of symbolization. It is as inconsistent with his deity and station as the King of kings, that he should appear as a representative of creatures, as it is that a creature should be employed to represent him. Besides, whenever he appears in the

vision, he is expressly designated by his titles, as the Alpha and the Omega, the Word of God, or the King of kings, and Lord of lords; but this agent is denominated an angel. The conjecture of Vitringa that he is the Holy Spirit, is obnoxious to the same objection.

Grotius, Dr. Hammond, and Rosenmuller, regard the seven thunders as symbols of the calamities of the siege and overthrow of Jerusalem by Titus, and the greatness and dreadfulness of those calamities, as the reason that they were not allowed to be written. But that assumption is both without any ground, and extremely absurd. Were the horrors of that siege greater than those with which the wild beast and false prophet are to be overwhelmed when taken and cast alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone? Were they greater than those inflicted on the apostate hierarchies, when the kings of the earth eat their flesh and burn them with fire? The thunders obviously, from the response of the angel, are not symbols of calamities, but of expressions from vast multitudes of thoughts and emotions excited by the loud voice he had uttered. They have no adaptation to symbolize calamities; and finally, the siege and capture of Jerusalem were many years anterior to the period of the visions, and cannot therefore be the subject of any of the symbols.

Coccius exhibits the thunder voices as merely indicating that events were to happen unexpectedly. But that is to suppose them symbolic, not of events, but only of their characteristics or mode of occurrence, which is against analogy. Events and agencies are symbols of events and agencies, not of their characteristics. If the intensity of the symbol indicate a corresponding intensity of the event which it denotes, it must be by some analogous characteristic: but there obviously is no more adaptation in the loudness than in the softness of a voice, to indicate the unexpectedness of an event.

Mr. Cuninghame regards the angel's voice as symbolic of the seventh trumpet, and the thunders of the seven vials. But that is to make them mere symbols of symbols, which is both against analogy, and is to strike from beneath us all grounds of assurance in their interpretation. What higher reason is there for assuming that the vesture of this angel, his actions, and the consequents of his agency are mere symbols of the symbols of the advent of Christ in the clouds, the sound of the seventh trumpet, and the seven vials, than there is for assuming that that advent, that sound, and those vials, are mere symbols of some other symbols? The admission of such a species of representation

would annihilate at once all certainty of meaning, and render the attempt alike absurd, either to interpret a revelation made through such means, or to make such a revelation.

Of those who regard the angel as the Son of God, some exhibit the opened book as the book of seven seals, or a part of it containing the revelations of the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters. But that proceeds on the assumption that the sealed book was a written copy of the Apocalypse, and not as sealed a mere symbol, and as opened, like its seals and the trumpets, a mere instrument of the revelation. If the sealed book were an autograph of the Apocalypse, why was not the apostle allowed to send it to the churches, instead of independently writing another? If that book embraced the whole Apocalypse, how can the chapters following this vision have been contained in a different and supplemental volume? On what ground can the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters be considered as having been delivered to the apostle and eaten by him, any more than the other parts of the Revelation? Those assumptions are manifestly without any authority whatever, and involve their authors in inextricable perplexities. The book of seven seals was a mere symbol of the purposes of God. Its being sealed denoted the undiscoverableness of his designs by the unaided efforts of creatures. The opening of the seals by Christ indicated the procedure of the Revelation from him, and their whole office was fulfilled in the representation of those truths.

Expositors exhibiting the angel as Christ, interpret his station on the sea and the land, as significant of his universal dominion. But it has no adaptation to denote such a relation; and as he is a symbol of men, and as teachers, not as rulers, that cannot be its import. It doubtless denotes a characteristic of their agency whom he represented. His form was gigantic. He probably in descending from the atmosphere advanced from the northwest, the direction of Saxony from Patmos, and alighted at the Adriatic or Ægean sea; and his placing his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land—which is the attitude of one, not at rest, but who is still to advance—signifies undoubtedly that some of those whom he symbolized were to cross the ocean, and bear the gospel to new isles and continents, and had its fulfilment in the migration of Protestants to this country and others, and proclamation of the gospel in these distant scenes. As England was one of the seven kingdoms, the migration cannot have been to her.

Mr. Brightman regards the seven thunders as the seven vial

angels, which is not only without analogy, but is to make them mere symbols of the symbols of a subsequent vision. Others, as Dean Woodhouse, regard the import of the thunder voices as inspired, but concealed for reasons of sovereignty or expedience. Mr. Daubuz, who regards the angel as a symbol of Luther, and the book opened as the Scriptures, interprets the thunders as the edicts of seven governments establishing the Protestant religion. But the laws of the Protestant kingdoms establishing the Reformed religion were not expressive of opinions respecting the period of the overthrow of the wild beast or Christ's advent, and furnished no occasion therefore for the response of the angel in regard to that advent. Nor is there any analogy between a thunder voice, and the enactment by rulers of a law. A thunder crash is the effect of a violent electrical explosion, and is itself a rapid and strong vibration of the atmosphere. The enactment and promulgation of an authoritative law are deliberate acts, and designed to give birth to order and stability. It is the vehement expression of passion by a vast multitude, not the calm acts of a legislature or monarch, that a thunder voice is suited to symbolize.

Vitringa exhibits the voice of the angel as prophetic of calamities denoted by the seven thunders, and those thunders as emblematic of the seven crusades. But first, the assumption that the thunder voices were inspired, indicative of the same thing as the voice of the angel, and prophetic of calamities, is obviously without any ground, and against analogy. Next, the crusades preceded the last army of the Turks and the fall of Constantinople, and were several centuries therefore anterior to the events denoted by this symbol. And finally, there is no analogy between a thunder crash, and the march of a devastating army. It is the lightning which kills, rends, and burns. The peal that follows is but the vibration of the air produced by its passage.

Sir Isaac Newton exhibits the seven thunders as a repetition of the prophecy of the seven trumpets, which is also wholly without authority, and presents no reason for the angel's response.

Mr. Elliott, who deems the angel to be the Son of God, regards the seven thunders as representing the bulls and anathemas of the pope in opposition to Luther, and their number as significant of the seven hills of Rome. Those bulls, however, do not express any opinion respecting the period of the overthrow of the wild beast and Christ's advent, that could give occasion to the angel's response. There is no conceivable relation between a pa-

pal excommunication of Luther and an asseveration by the Son of God that his advent is not to take place till the seventh trumpet, nor is it consistent with the majesty of Christ to exhibit him as responding to the blasphemous assumptions and execrations of that apostate power.

Mr. Keith exhibits the angel as denoting the Reformers, the book as representing the Scriptures, and the thunders as symbols of wars. But a thunder voice symbolizes a violent expression of thought and feeling, not a battle onset. It is by weapons that men are killed, not by voices.

SECTION XXV.

CHAPTER XI. 1-6.

THE TEMPLE AND WITNESSES.

AND a reed like a rod was given to me, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. And the court which is without the temple reject, and measure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city they shall tread forty-two months. And I will give to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sack-cloth. They are the two olive-trees and the two lamps which stand before the Lord of the earth, and if any one wills to injure them, fire proceeds from their mouth, and devours their enemies; and if any one wills to injure them, so he must be killed. They have power to shut heaven that rain may not fall during the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the land with every stroke as often as they may will.

The scene of this action was obviously the earth also, to which the apostle had descended to receive from the rainbow angel the little book. Jerusalem, with its temple and courts, was displayed, therefore, before him. The rod, the temple, and the measuring are symbolic. The rod is the symbol of the revealed will of God, in conformity with which the temple was built. The temple was the edifice erected by his command in which the worship enjoined by him was to be publicly offered; and consisted first of the holy of holies, in which was his mercy-seat or throne; and next of the sanctuary or main part of the structure in which the golden candlestick, the altar of incense, and the table of bread were stationed, and prayers were offered by the priests, and hymns sung

by the Levites. As the former symbolized, as we are expressly told, Hebrews ix. 11, 12, 23, 24, the heavens, the scene in which God visibly manifests himself, Christ intercedes, and the cherubim, the representatives of the redeemed, serve in his presence ; so the other sanctuary symbolizes the place or places on earth in which the true worshippers offer him the public worship which he enjoins. The altar on which incense, the symbol of prayer, was offered, represented the cross of Christ, the instrument of his expiation,¹ and thence of reconciliation and access to God ; and the worshippers denoted those who conduct the public worship he has appointed, sustaining the same relations to the place of homage, and the rites and worship that are enjoined, that the priests and Levites sustained to the sanctuary and the services of their office.

To measure the temple, then, was to seek and learn the truths taught in the Scriptures, and symbolized, first by the inner sanctuary respecting the throne of God in heaven, the exaltation and intercession of Christ in his presence, and the relations to him there of the spirits of the redeemed denoted by the cherubim ; and next the truths symbolized by the outer sanctuary respecting the place or places on earth, which he has appointed for the worship which he enjoins on his people, respecting the expiation on which they are to rely for pardon and acceptance denoted by the altar, and respecting the ministers who conduct the worship he enjoins, represented by the offerers of the worship in the sanctuary.

The court which was on the outside, was that in which the congregation stood while incense was offered,² and denoted the station of the congregation of visible worshippers, in contradistinction from theirs who conduct the public worship. To reject it as no part of the temple, was, therefore, to reject the body of the nominal or visible, as not true worshippers ; and the direction to reject it, was equivalent to a prophecy that the nominal was not to be a true church ; that the vast crowds who were to throng the court professedly to pay homage to God, were not to be his adorers.

The holy city was the city in which the ancient temple stood, and the priests and daily worshippers resided, and to which those dwelling elsewhere went to offer homage. The prediction, therefore, that the court without should be given to the Gentiles, and that they should tread the holy city forty-two months, denoted that they should constitute the congregation of visible worshippers during that period, and exercise the civil polity under which

¹ Ara Crucis. Concil. Trident. Sess. xxii. c. 2

² Luke i. 9, 10, 21, 22.

the church should subsist ; and as during the continuance of the temple the Gentiles were aliens from God and idolaters, in contradistinction from the Jews who were his covenant people, it denotes that the visible should be an apostate and idolatrous church during that period, and give occasion thereby for the testimony of the witnesses to the truth, against false teachers; and usurping and persecuting rulers. This is seen also from the fact that the Gentiles have belonged to the visible church and constituted it solely for a much longer period than the forty-two months. There has been no purely Jewish church since the first ages. The relation, therefore, in which the Gentiles were to constitute the church during that period, was not literally as Gentiles in opposition to Jews, but as apostates from God in contradistinction from true worshippers.

The promise to give to the two witnesses, was a promise of such gifts to them as were requisite to qualify them for their office. To prophesy as a witness, is to proclaim the revealed will of God and vindicate his prerogatives, in opposition to false teachers who pervert and deny his truth, and to rulers who usurp his rights and arrogate a dominion over his people and his laws. The period of their testimony was to correspond to the apostasy of the church, twelve hundred and sixty days, and forty-two months of thirty days each, being the same.

Sackcloth is a symbol of humiliation and sorrow. Their prophecy in sackcloth thence denoted their witnessing for God in humiliation, under a profound sense of his rights, and in grief at the apostasy of his professing people.

The two olive-trees and two lamps which symbolize the two witnesses, are those doubtless, or like those exhibited in vision to Zechariah, chap. iv. 4, 11, 14, of which the trees that distilled the oil into the lamps represented the teachers, and the lamps the recipients of their doctrine or believers. The two witnesses are the teachers then and the recipients of the truth, in whom it exerts and displays its power, as the oil transmitted from the olive-trees to the lamps burned and diffused its light through the temple.

The representation that if any one wills to injure them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies, is a prediction that they were to defend themselves from their persecutors by their words as witnesses for God, and by those alone, and that the threatenings of vengeance which they were to proclaim from his word were to be fulfilled on their enemies. That they were to have power to shut heaven that rain should not fall du-

ring their prophecy, and power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the land with every stroke as often as they may choose, denotes that the denunciation of terrible judgments on apostates was to be an eminent part of their office, as it was of Moses and Elijah; and that their ministry was to receive from God the most evident sanctions in the destruction of those who, in despite of their teachings and warnings, should persist in apostasy.

The period denoted by twelve hundred and sixty days, is undoubtedly twelve hundred and sixty years. There are examples of that use of days in the symbolic prophecies of Ezekiel, chap. iv. 4-6, and Daniel, vii. 25, viii. 14, xii. 11, 12; and it is in accordance with analogy. A day, during which the earth revolves on its axis, has a resemblance which fits it to be a symbol of the period of its revolution round the sun; and it is the only period drawn from the motion of the earth that presents that similitude. All shorter spaces are artificial divisions; all longer are either artificial, as jubilees and centuries, or founded, like cycles, on relations to other celestial bodies that bear no analogy to a revolution round the sun. It is the only period therefore formed by the earth's motion, that could be used to symbolize a year. That it is to be treated as symbolic, is indisputably certain. It is unquestionably a measure of time. But if a measure of time, it is of necessity a symbolic measure; inasmuch as the agency which it measures is symbolic. Founded altogether as the symbol is on analogy, it must be interpreted throughout in accordance with that relation. To deny that character to any part of it, were in effect to deny it to the whole; while to admit that the measure of the witnesses' agency is symbolic, and yet interpret it literally, were to assume that the symbol is identically the same as that which it represents, which is against analogy.

In like manner a month, during which the moon revolves on its axis, has a resemblance which fits it to be a symbol of the period of its revolution round the sun, and that is the only longer period to which it presents that similitude. The forty-two months therefore are by the same law twelve hundred and sixty years, and solar years doubtless; as though the monthly division of time was drawn from the revolution of the moon, yet it was reckoned as of thirty as well as of twenty-nine days, and the year itself was determined by the revolution of the earth round the sun.

It may be thought an obstacle to this construction, that as the period of a lunar revolution is not thirty days, forty-two lunar

months are not equal to twelve hundred and sixty days. But neither are twelve hundred and sixty days equal to the number in three and a half years, nor the number in forty-two months of thirty days each equal to the number in three years and a half; the astronomical year consisting of three hundred and sixty-five days and a fraction, in place of three hundred and sixty, at which it was reckoned by the Jews and other eastern nations. Yet three hundred and sixty days were taken as the period of the revolution of the seasons or a year, although they were known not to be the true period; and thirty days were taken also as the period of a lunar revolution or a month, although they were in like manner known not to be the true period; and they are used interchangeably accordingly for the same period, and employed with equal propriety as a representative of twelve hundred and sixty astronomical years.

The command to measure the temple of God, was addressed to the apostle doubtless, as representing the same persons as he symbolized in the prediction that he must again prophesy before peoples, and nations, and tongues, and many kings; and his action denoted that they were to seek and learn, first, the truths which the Scriptures teach, and that were symbolized by the inner sanctuary, respecting the throne of God, the intercessions of Christ, and the residence of the spirits of the redeemed in his presence; and next, the truths that were symbolized by the outer sanctuary respecting the expiation on which the true worshippers on earth rely for pardon and acceptance, the places in which acceptable worship is offered, and the ministers who offer that worship.

The prediction, on the other hand, that the witnesses were to prophesy forty-two months against persecutors, was a prediction that they were to proclaim those truths and vindicate the rights of God against false teachers and usurping rulers, and denounce the judgments threatened in his word against their usurpations and idolatries. ✓

The agency symbolized by the measuring of the temple, had a most exact and conspicuous counterpart in the ministry of the Reformers and their successors. The great truths which they drew from the Scriptures, and proclaimed in opposition to the apostate church, were precisely those which were symbolized by the inner and outer sanctuary;—that God alone has the rights of deity, and is the only object of worship, in opposition to anti-christ, to canonized creatures, and to idols; that Christ's sacrifice is the only expiation for sin, in contradiction to the sacrifice of the

mass, and voluntary inflictions; that he is the only intercessor, in opposition to saints and angels; that the spirits of the redeemed pass immediately into his presence and are accepted and exalted to happiness, in contravention of the doctrine of purgatory; that acceptable worship is offered wherever two or three gather together in the name of Christ, in contradiction to the doctrine of the apostate church, that homage can be offered only in edifices consecrated by superstitious rites, sanctified by the presence of relics, and furnished with an altar, images of saints, and other idolatrous objects; and finally, that they are legitimate offerers of worship who are publicly set apart to that office, and who proclaim the truths and present the homage which God enjoins in his word, in opposition to the teachers of the apostate church, who regard those alone as true ministers who derive their authority from the pope, or from patriarchs, metropolitans, or diocesan bishops.

I. They learned from the Scriptures and proclaimed the truths symbolized by the mercy-seat, that God alone fills the throne of the universe, and has the rights of deity, in opposition to the doctrine of the apostate church, that the pope is his vicegerent, and is invested with all his legislative and judicial rights.

The mode in which the rights of God were arrogated by the popes and ascribed to them by the church, is shown by the following passages. "We agree that the holy apostolic chair and Roman pontiff hold the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman pontiff himself is the successor of the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles and the true vicar of Christ, the head of the whole church, and the father and teacher of all Christians, and that through the blessed Peter, plenary power was given to him by our Lord Jesus Christ to feed, guide, and govern the universal church."¹

In assuming to be the vicar of Christ on earth, the pope claims to be invested with his rights and prerogatives as the king, the lawgiver, and the judge of the church, and thence to be entitled to the same absolute submission and obedience from men as are due to him. "If the pontiff be compared to Christ in respect to plenitude of power, he has not that absolute plenitude, but only his own peculiar portion, according to the measure of Christ's gift: for Christ reigns over the whole church whether in heaven, in purgatory, or on earth, embracing all from the beginning to the end of the world; and can moreover make laws at his pleasure, institute sacraments, and confer grace even without sacra-

¹ Definit. Concil. Florent. Labbei Concil. tom. xxxi. p. 1031.

ments ; but the pope only governs this part of the church which is on earth while he lives, and cannot change the laws of Christ, institute sacraments, or remit sins without a sacrament. If, however, the supreme pontiff be compared with other bishops, he may be justly said to have a plenitude of power ; for others have only a limited authority over limited districts, but he is placed over the whole Christian world, and has all the plenary power which Christ left for the benefit of the church on earth."¹

"The church is a fold, a kingdom, a body. But a fold must have a shepherd, a kingdom a king, a body a head. Some one therefore must succeed St. Peter in the primacy. It cannot be said that Christ is the head and king of the church. Christ is indeed the invisible head of the church ; but inasmuch as the church is a visible and outward society, it must have a visible and outward head succeeding to Peter in the pontificate, whose office it is to exercise an outward care of the whole family or society."²

The pope accordingly claims and is held by the Catholic church to have Christ's power as a lawgiver : "Our inquiry is whether the pope has a real power over all the faithful in spiritual things, as kings have in temporal ; that as they can frame civil laws, and punish transgressors with temporal punishments, so the pontiff can enact ecclesiastical laws truly obligatory on the conscience, and punish transgressors with at least spiritual punishments, such as excommunication, suspension, an interdict : " and the answer is, that "it has ever been held by the Catholic church, that bishops in their own dioceses, and the Roman pontiff in the whole church, are true ecclesiastical princes, who can by their own authority, without the consent of the people or concurrence of the presbyters, enact laws which bind the conscience, judge in ecclesiastical causes in the manner of other judges, and inflict punishments."³

Bouvier in like manner enumerates among the prerogatives of the pontiff, the power of issuing doctrinal decrees, and enacting laws which are obligatory on all Christians.⁴

¹ Bellarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. i. c. ix. p. 536.

² Bailly, de Eccl. tom. ii. p. 174.

³ At in ecclesia Catholica semper creditum est, episcopus in suis diocesisibus, et Romanum pontificem in tota ecclesia esse veros principes ecclesiasticos, qui possint sua auctoritate etiam sine plebis consensu, vel presbyterorum concilio, leges ferre quæ in conscientia obligent, judicare in causis ecclesiasticis, more aliorum judicium, ac demum punire. Bellarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. iv. c. xv. pp. 845, 846.

⁴ Bouvier, de Vera Eccl. p. 309. Prærogativa tertia est, Potestas edendi decreta fidei et condendi leges quæ cunctos obligent Christianos.

He claims in like manner the power of forgiving sins, and of debarring from forgiveness. "He is said to loose who remits sins, who frees from punishment, who exempts from law in respect to vows, oaths, and similar obligations. When, therefore, it was said to Peter generally, Whatsoever you loose or bind, the power was given him of legislating, rescinding, punishing, remitting, so that he became the judge and prince of all who are in the church."¹

"Should any one say the words of the Saviour, 'Receive the Holy Spirit; whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted to them, and whosoever ye retain, they are retained,' are not to be understood of the power of remitting or retaining sins by the sacrament of penance, as the Catholic church has always held, and shall turn them against the institution of this sacrament, to the authorization of preaching the gospel, let him be accursed."²

But in this arrogation the pope usurps the incommunicable rights and prerogatives of God. He openly claims that he holds in the church on earth the station of the eternal Word, exhibits himself as seated on his throne, and demands a homage that is due only to him. And that is the peculiar characteristic of the great rival of Christ, the man of sin, the son of perdition, as described by the pen of inspiration, who is hostile and contemptuous towards all that is called divine or that is venerable, so that he seats himself in the temple of God as the Almighty sat in the inner sanctuary, and proclaims that he is God by the assumption of his throne and arrogation of his rights.

The Reformers accordingly discerned and denounced this impious arrogation, and embraced and proclaimed the doctrine of the Scriptures, that God alone is the lawgiver, king, and judge of the church.

Luther devoted his tract respecting the power of the Roman pontiff to the refutation of his claims and vindication of the prerogatives of God, pronouncing it blasphemy to represent that Peter held the rights of a divine sway, asserting that he was but a mere minister of the word, and that Christ is the sole Lord of the church in heaven and on earth, and showing that the lofty terms empire, the rights of empire, and celestial and terrestrial empire, are appropriate only to God, and that in applying them to the pope they made him a deity.³ He accordingly denounced the pope as antichrist, and the papal hierarchy as the kingdom

¹ Bellarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. i. c. xiii. p. 558.

² Concil. Trident. sess. xiv. de Sacramen. Pœnit. can. 3.

³ Lutheri Op. tom. i. f. 304, 305.

of that rival. "I assent to the impudent boast of the sacerdotal order, that they have separated themselves from the church of God and exercise a despotism over it; for it is the acknowledgment of that which I allege, that the church of the pope is the kingdom of antichrist, which opposes, and exalts itself above God, and all that is divine, and as God seats itself in his temple."¹

Leo X. accordingly, in his bull against Luther, alleges it as one of the grounds of condemning him, that he asserted that the Roman pontiff, the successor of Peter, was not constituted the vicar of Christ over all the churches of the world.²

Melancthon, in like manner, denominates the papal kingdom the kingdom of antichrist.³ And Calvin: "Daniel and Paul foretold that antichrist was to put himself in the temple of God. We regard the Roman pontiff as the head of that abominable kingdom."⁴ And such were the views of all the Reformers.⁵

They denounced his assumption of legislative and judicial authority over the church as a usurpation. "The church can have no other head than Christ." "We do not approve of the doctrine of the Roman clergy who make their Roman pontiff the universal pastor and supreme head of the Catholic church militant on earth, and thence the true vicar of Christ, having a plenitude of power, as they express themselves, and absolute dominion over the church. But we teach that Christ is Lord, and is to continue the only universal pastor and high-priest in the presence of God the Father, and to fulfil all the offices of high-priest and pastor to the end of the world, and therefore needs no vicar, who is the representative only of one that is absent, but Christ is present with the church and its vivifying head."⁶ "Bishops have not the power of enacting any thing contrary to the gospel." "It is not lawful for any creatures, whether angels or men, kings or bishops, to institute laws or rites that are at war with the word of God."⁷

And as they thus held God to be the only religious lawgiver, so they held the Scriptures to be the only rule of faith. "The canonical Scripture—the word of God, revealed by the Holy

¹ Lutheri Op. tom. i. f. 513.

² Lutheri Op. tom. i. f. 478. Romanus pontifex Petri successor, non est Christi vicarius super omnes totius mundi ecclesias ab ipso Christo in B. Petro institutus.

³ Melancthoni Op. tom. ii. p. 451.

⁴ Cal. Inst. lib. iv. c. ii. s. 12.

⁵ Bellarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. iii. c. i. p. 701.

⁶ Confess. Helvet. c. xvii.

⁷ Confess. August. de Potest. Eccl. So also the Saxon: Est igitur prima regula; nulli creaturæ, non angelis, non hominibus, non regibus, non episcopis, licet condere leges aut ritus pugnantes cum verbo Dei. Sax. Confess. c. xx. de Tradit.

Spirit and communicated to the world through prophets and apostles—alone contains the whole of religion and the whole law of life, and its import is to be sought from itself alone, by making it its own interpreter.”¹

They thus, in respect to the mercy-seat, fulfilled the symbol of measuring the inner temple, by exhibiting God as alone filling the throne of the universe, and vindicating his incommunicable prerogatives as the lawgiver of his kingdom.

II. They learned from the Scriptures, and proclaimed the truths symbolized also by the inner temple, that God is the only object of worship, in contradistinction from creatures and images, to which the apostate church offered her homage.

The pontiffs not only encouraged and enjoined the worship of saints and angels, but assumed the power of declaring who of the dead were saints, and constituting them objects of homage. “Canonization is nothing else than the public testimony of the church to the true sanctity and glory of one who has died, with a judgment and decree by which the honors are assigned to him that are due to those who reign happily with God. And those honors are seven. For first, they who are canonized are inscribed in the catalogue of the saints, and it is ordered that they shall by all be publicly held and denominated saints. Next, they are to be invoked in the public prayers of the church. Thirdly, temples and altars are to be dedicated to God in memory of them. Fourthly, sacrifices, as well of the eucharist, as of praises and prayers which are commonly called the service, or canonical hours, are to be publicly offered to God in their honor. Fifthly, festal days are to be celebrated in their memory. Sixthly, their likenesses are to be painted and crowned with rays of light, in token of the glory to which they are exalted in heaven. And finally, their relics are to be enclosed in costly shrines, and publicly honored.”

“In regard to the question to whom does the power belong of canonizing the saints, it is to be noticed that a person may be canonized in two modes;—in one particularly, so that he may be held and worshipped as a saint only in a single province or diocese;—in the other generally, so that he may be held by the whole church to be a saint, and no one have leave to doubt of his saintship. In the first mode any bishop has the right to canonize. But Alexander III. and Innocent III., perceiving the abuses that arose from that mode of canonization, forbid that any one should thereafter be made the object of worship, except with

¹ Confess. Helvet. c. 1, 2.

the approbation of the Roman pontiff, to whom it is universally held the power belongs of canonizing in the second manner, so that persons shall be held as saints by the whole church."¹

The Bullarium Magnum contains, accordingly, many of the decrees by which, "after sacred hymns, litanies, and invocations of the grace of the Holy Spirit, the pontiff proceeds, in order to the honor of the most holy and indivisible Trinity, the exaltation of the Catholic faith, and the augmentation of the Christian religion, by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and with the counsel of the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops of the city, to declare the subject of the canonization a saint, inscribe him in the catalogue of the saints, and enact that on the day of his death every year, the commemoration of him among the holy confessors shall be observed by the whole church with a pious homage."²

In conformity with this legalization of the worship of saints, pictures, or images and relics, the council of Trent enjoined all bishops and other teachers to instruct the faithful to invoke the saints, honor their relics, and worship their images.³ And all who are inducted into the sacred office in that church, are required to assent to the creed of Pius IV., which asserts that the saints who reign with Christ are to be worshipped and invoked, that they offer prayer to God for us, that their relics are to be venerated, and that the images of Christ, the ever virgin mother of God, and other saints, are to be kept and treated with honor and veneration.⁴

But this worship the Reformers saw was wholly unauthorized by the Scriptures, and an open and formal idolatry. Thus Luther, in his *Babylonian Captivity*, represents the papal doctrines respecting the homage of the saints as adverse to the worship of God, and denounces the pontiffs as mere ministers of golden calves, total strangers to the divine law, wholly unacquainted with the gospel, ignorant of the duty of pastors, and teaching nothing except their own inventions.⁵ In like manner Melancthon: "The invocation of the dead, as is customary in what is called the worship of the saints, is manifestly a mad idolatry."⁶ "It is a palpable abuse to conceive of the saints as auxiliaries who cure diseases, avert dangers, or fight battles, as is pretended of St. George, since they are works of which God alone is the

¹ Bellarmini de Sanct. Beatit. lib. i. c. vii. viii. pp. 699-701.

² Bullar. Mag. Decret. ii. Innocentii XII. tom. vi. p. 128.

³ Concil. Trident. Sess. xxv. de Invocat.

⁴ Syll. Confess. p. 5.

⁵ De Captivit. Bab. tom. ii. f. 277.

⁶ Melancth. Op. tom. iv. p. 531

author. It is a heathen madness to ascribe particular offices to certain saints, or imagine that a saint hears prayers addressed to one statue rather than another."¹ "All worships are idolatrous that are instituted without a command from God. The first precept is, Thou shalt have no foreign gods, which is to be understood not only of formal idolatry, such as the worship of statues, but of all human worships, which are necessarily idolatrous, inasmuch as they are instituted in opposition to this command."² "Invocation is an honor that is to be rendered to God only, the eternal Father, the Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit." "They who invoke God should offer their prayers through the Son. But the custom of invoking men who have departed from life, is to be rejected and denounced as transferring to them the glory which is due only to God, ascribing to them omniscience and omnipotence, and obscuring the glory of Christ, by attributing to them his office as Mediator. We altogether condemn, therefore, the custom of invoking saints who have departed from this life."³

So also the Helvetian Confession: "We teach that the true God is alone to be adored and worshipped, according to the command, Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and worship and serve him alone. We therefore do not worship nor invoke the saints in heaven, nor acknowledge them as our intercessors or mediators in the presence of the Father, for God and Christ the Mediator suffice for us."⁴ The sole right of God to the homage of creatures, and the idolatry of exalting the saints to the station of mediators, were principal themes, in like manner, of the public teachings and writings of Calvin, and all the other Reformers.⁵ Thus they measured the inner temple as the symbol of the heavenly sanctuary, in which the Self-existent alone is enthroned as God, and has the rights of homage from worshippers.

III. They learned from the word of God, and proclaimed the truth symbolized by the altar, that Christ's sacrifice is the only expiation for sin, in opposition to the expiations of the apostate church by masses and penances.

The Catholics held that the sacrifice of Christ is efficacious only for the sins that precede baptism, and that expiations were

¹ Act. Worm. op. tom. iv. p. 678.

² Ennar. in Psal. 114, tom. ii. p. 807. Constat autem hanc verè esse idolatriam cum pro Deo colitur quod non est Deus, aut cum Deus alius fingitur quam est.

³ Confess. August. c. xxi. Syll. Confess. p. 188.

⁴ Syll. Confess. pp. 23, 24.

⁵ Cal. Inst. lib. i. c. xiv. s. 12, lib. iii. c. xx. s. 20, 21, 22, 23. Sax. Confess. Syll. Confess. p. 307. Chemnicii Exam. Concil. Trident. pr. iii. de Invocat. Sanct. pp. 140-227.

made for subsequent transgressions by the mass, and satisfactions by penances. Thus the Council of Trent: "Inasmuch as in the divine sacrifice which is offered in the mass, the same Christ is contained and is immolated without blood, who once offered himself with blood on the altar of the cross, this holy synod teaches that that sacrifice is truly propitiatory, and that if we approach God contritely and penitently, with a true heart, a right faith, with fear and awe, we shall obtain compassion through it, and find grace opportunely for us, the Lord being propitiated by the oblation of it, and granting favor and forgiving sins even that are great; for it is one and the same victim that is now offered by the ministry of the priests, who then offered himself on the cross. The fruits indeed of his bloody oblation are most abundantly acquired through this, which is without blood, so far is it from derogating in any manner from that; and therefore it is to be offered not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other needs of living believers, but for the dead in Christ also who are not yet fully purified."¹

"If all the regenerate had such gratitude to God, that they always preserved the rectitude which they receive by his grace in baptism, there would be no necessity that another sacrament besides that should be instituted in order to the remission of sins. But God who is rich in mercy and knows our nature, provided a remedy for those who should afterwards yield themselves to the service of sin and power of Satan, in the sacrament of penance, by which the benefit of Christ's death is applied to those who fall after baptism."²

"The Catholic church teaches and has always taught that the sacrifice of the mass is not only a propitiation for punishments, but for sins also, and for great as well as small; and that it is the means of procuring not only spiritual benefits, but temporal also, and may, therefore, be offered for sins, for punishments, and for all other necessities."³ "A satisfaction is nothing else than an action by which he who has injured another, does as much as is sufficient to compensate for the injury, or as much as he who is injured justly exacts."⁴ "Although we acknowledge that chastisements inflicted by God, if borne with equanimity, are of no small service towards a satisfaction, yet the term more properly denotes labors that are voluntarily assumed or imposed by a spiritual judge, to make compensation to God for injuries."⁵

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. xxii. de Sacrif. M. c. 2.

² Ibid. sess. xiv. c. 1.

³ Bellarmini de Missa, lib. ii. c. 1, tom. iii. pp. 795, 796.

⁴ Ibid. de Pœnit. lib. iv. c. 1, tom. iii. p. 1087. ⁵ Ibid. lib. iv. c. 12, tom. iii. p. 1153.

“If any one shall say that a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God in the mass, or that the offering is nothing else than that Christ is given to be received by us by the hand, let him be accursed.”¹

“If any one shall say that penance in the Catholic church is not a true and proper sacrament for believers, instituted by Christ in order to their reconciliation to God as often as they fall into sin after baptism, let him be anathema.”²

“If any one shall say that the satisfactions by which the penitent purchase release from sin through Jesus Christ, are not of divine institution, but are traditions of men that obscure the doctrine of grace, the true worship of God, and the benefit itself of Christ’s death, let him be accursed.”³

But these false and impious doctrines the Reformers rejected, and taught that the sacrifice of Christ is the only expiation for sin. Thus Melancthon: “That sacrifice which pacified the wrath of God against the sins of men, was the price for sin, and procured reconciliation, grace, and eternal life, was the death alone of the Son of God, who offered himself to the eternal Father, and was himself the high priest of his oblation.”⁴ “There is no sacrifice, nor ever was, that could procure a remission of sins and be applicable to others, except the one sacrifice of Christ, once made on the cross. The mass, therefore, the work of a priest, is not a sacrifice that can procure the pardon of sin, either to himself or others.”⁵

In like manner Luther also: “It is a most impious abuse by which it has come to pass, that no opinion is more generally received in the church, than that the mass is a sacrifice.”⁶ “The sufferings of Christ were the oblation and sacrifice not only for original, but also for all other sins.” “This glory of Christ’s sacrifice ought not to be transferred to the work of the priest, for it is expressly said, by one oblation the saints are perfected. It is, moreover, impious to transfer to the work of the priest, the reliance which should be placed on the oblation and intercessions of Christ.”⁷ “The offering of the mass for the dead is heretical and

¹ Concil. Trid. sess. xxii. de Sacrif. Misæ. Can. 1.

² Ibid. sess. xiv. de Pœnit. Can. 1.

³ Ibid. can. 14.

⁴ Melancth. op. tom. iv. Act. Ratisbon, c. 7. p. 746.

⁵ Ibid. tom. ii. de usu Sacram. p. 190. Also, in Psal. 116, p. 833. Sax. Confess. de Remiss. ap. Syll. Confess. p. 251.

⁶ Lutheri op. tom. ii. de Capl. Bab. fol. 264, 268, 269. Also his tract de Abrog. Misæ. tom. ii. fol. 440–468.

⁷ Confess. August. ap. Syll. Conf. p. 194.

blasphemous, and the pretence that it was instituted by Christ a palpable lie."¹

So also Calvin: "It is an intolerable blasphemy of Christ and the sacrifice which he offered in his death for us on the cross, to repeat an oblation for the purpose of propitiating God, purchasing forgiveness, and obtaining justification."²

The Reformers rejected the doctrine likewise of satisfaction for sins by penance. "But these satisfactions have obscured the work of Christ, as the learned have imagined they were an equivalent for eternal death, while the unlearned have thought a remission of sins was purchased by them, as is usual with the worshipps that are not commanded by God, such as vain repetitions of prayer, invocations of saints, and pilgrimages."³ Such were the teachings of the whole body of the Reformers,⁴ and thus they verified the vision by measuring the altar, the symbol of Christ's sacrifice, the only expiation for sin.

IV. They learned from the word of God, and proclaimed the truth symbolized also by the altar of incense, and by the entrance of the high priest into the inner sanctuary, that Christ is the only intercessor, in opposition to creatures, to whom the apostate church ascribes that office.

The Catholics held that the saints who reign with Christ are mediators and intercessors, and are to be invoked as such. Thus Bernard represents the mother of Christ as our advocate with him. "Let us worship Mary with all our hearts, for it is his will who wishes us to be his, wholly through her. You fear to approach the Father. He has given you Jesus as a mediator. But perhaps you fear the divine majesty in him, inasmuch as though he has become man, he yet remains God. Do you wish an advocate with him? Repair to Mary, and I hesitate not to say, she will be heard. The Son will hear the mother, and the Father will hear the Son. This is my chief confidence. This is the whole ground of my hope. We seek grace, and we seek it through Mary, and what she seeks she finds, and cannot be frustrated."⁵ A great number of passages occur in his sermons on the Virgin in which he exhibits her as a mediator, and ascribes to her all the offices of Christ as an advocate and intercessor.

The following is a prayer addressed to her by one of the popes,

¹ Lutheri. disp. cont. Lovan. tom. i. f. 538.

² Cal. Inst. lib. iv. c. 18, s. 14.

³ Confess. August. ap. Syll. Conf. p. 200.

⁴ Cal. Inst. lib. iii. c. 4. s. 25. Chemnicii Exam. Concil. Trid. pr. iii. p. 88, pr. iv. pp. 55-76.

⁵ Bernardi in Nativ. Mar. tom. i. pp. 1014, 1015.

who promised three hundred days indulgence to whoever daily repeated it to her honor. "O most clement queen and sweet virgin, holy Mary mother of God, mother of orphans, solace of the desolate, way of the erring, safety and hope of those who trust in thee, fountain of life and favor, fountain of health and grace, fountain of piety and indulgence, fountain of consolation and joy, grant me true and becoming tears of lamentation for my sins, and give me truly to know, frequently by thy aid to begin, perseveringly to pursue, and happily to finish whatever thy Son requires of me. O, flower of virgins, queen of heaven, I heartily implore that with all the saints and chosen of God thou wouldst hasten to my counsel, and aid in all my prayers, trials, and necessities. O star of the sea, port of safety, holy guide of the shipwrecked, sweet patron of the miserable, most learned advocate of the guilty, the only hope of the despairing, august saviour of sinners, in my last day irradiate me I pray thee with the splendor of thy countenance; be thou the herald, sacred and pious nurse, of the day and hour of my death. Grant thou a harbor to the shipwrecked, interpose for the culprit, give solace to the wretched. Be thou my hope that I may not sink in despair in the agony of death, as there can then be no other hope than thee, virgin parent and daughter of the Father, to whom do thou reconcile me. O, inexhaustible fountain of compassion and favor, compassion and favor itself, repelling no one, most benignant auditor, graciously hear and receive this prayer, and grant me eternal life. Listen and hear me, most benignant virgin, mother of God and of mercy."¹

Very similar prayers addressed to a vast crowd of saints, may be seen in the Roman Breviaries. And the saints were regarded by Catholics universally as necessary and efficacious intercessors with God.²

But the ascription thus of this office of Christ to creatures, was regarded by the Reformers as impious in the utmost degree, and rejected and denounced. Thus in the Augsburg Confession: "God has proposed to us his son Jesus Christ as the mediator and high priest interceding for us, and assured us that it is for his sake alone that we are to be heard and accepted."³ The Helvetic Confession, also: "We teach that God alone is to be adored and worshipped." "We invoke him alone in all the necessities and conditions of life, and through the intervention of the only mediator and intercessor, our Lord Jesus Christ." "The saints

¹ Chemnicii Exam. Concil. Trid. pr. iii. p. 156.

² Bellarmini de Missa, lib. ii. c. 8, tom. iii.

³ Syll. Confess. p. 188.

in heaven we neither adore, invoke, nor acknowledge as mediators or intercessors with God."¹ So likewise the Saxon: "We condemn it as a heathenish debasement that the custom is maintained of addressing those who have departed from life, and invoking aid from them. Such an invocation is an apostasy from God, and an ascription of efficacious assistance and intercession to creatures." "To ascribe omnipotence to creatures is an impiety. The invocation of a creature who has departed from this life is an ascription to him of omnipotence, for it implies that he sees the hearts of all, and distinguishes true from false regrets. But that is to be ascribed only to the eternal Father, to his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. No invocation, therefore, should be addressed to the dead."² In like manner, Calvin, Chemnitz, and the whole body of the Reformers.³

They thus verified the prophecy by measuring the altar of incense and the inner sanctuary, the symbols of Christ's sole mediation and intercession in the presence of God in the heavenly temple.

V. They learned from the Scriptures, and proclaimed the truth symbolized by the cherubim in the inner sanctuary, that the redeemed at death pass immediately to heaven, and are accepted and exalted to stations in the presence of Christ, in opposition to the Catholic doctrine of purgatory.

The papists hold that "purgatory is a place in which as in a prison, souls that are not fully cleansed here, are purified after this life, in order that they may enter heaven, where nothing is admitted that is defiled."⁴ The council of Florence decreed that if true penitents departed from life in the love of God before they had made the requisite satisfaction by penance for their sins and omissions, their souls were purified by purgatorial punishments after death; and that in order to their release from those punishments, the suffrages of believers are serviceable, such as the sacrifice of the mass, prayers, alms, and other works of piety which the faithful are accustomed to perform for other believers according to the appointments of the church; that the souls of those who after the reception of baptism had not contracted any spot of sin, and those also who after having incurred the stain of sin are purified either while in the body, or after their release from it, are immediately received into heaven, and clearly behold God as he is; one more perfectly, however, than another, ac-

¹ Syll. Confess. pp. 23, 24.

² Ibid. 307, 308.

³ Cal. Inst. lib. iii. c. xx. s. 20-27. Chemnicii Exam. Concil. Trident. pr. iii. pp. 140-227. Bellarmini Disp. tom. ii. de Sanct. Beat. lib. i. c. xv. p. 716.

⁴ Bellarmini de Purgat. lib. i. c. 1, p. 561.

ording to the diversity of their merits ; but that the souls of those who die, either in actual, mortal, or original sin only, immediately descend to hell, to be punished, however, in different degrees.¹

The council of Trent also : “ Since the Catholic church, instructed by the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures, and the ancient tradition of the fathers, has taught by the holy councils, and recently by this general synod, that there is a purgatory, and that souls detained there are aided by the suffrages of the faithful, and especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar ; this holy synod commands the bishops to endeavor diligently that the sound doctrine received from the holy fathers and sacred councils respecting purgatory, be everywhere taught, received, and held by believers.”²

It was accordingly everywhere taught and received. Masses and prayers were offered for the dead, for which the priest exacted payment, and the doctrine thence made the means of a vast system of extortion.

But the fiction was rejected and exposed by the Reformers. Thus Melancthon : “ The souls of the just do not go to tortures, but to spiritual joy and peace.”³ “ Let the doctrine be held which was taught by prophets and apostles, who point out only two ways to the dead ; for they assert that they who are converted to God are assuredly heirs of eternal salvation ; and that they who are not converted are as certainly cast into eternal punishment.”⁴ Luther for a short period retained his belief in purgatory, as is seen in his *Leipsic disputation*, and his assertion of the articles ascribed to him in the bull of Leo X. ;⁵ where, however, he admits that it could not be proved from the Scriptures. He soon, however, rejected it. “ I fully approve of your denial of purgatory, and condemnation of masses, vigils, and whatever else is founded on that imposture.”⁶ It was rejected also by all the other Reformers. Thus the *Helvetic Confession* : “ We hold that believers pass immediately from death to Christ, and have no need of the suffrages of the living, prayers, or any other offices for the dead. We hold, on the other hand, that the unbelieving are immediately precipitated into hell, from which no exit

¹ *Labbei Concil.* tom. xxxi. p. 1031.

² *Concil. Trident.* sess. xxv. de Purgat.

³ *Melancth. de Eccles.* Op. tom. ii. p. 143.

⁴ *Melancth. Respons. ad Artic. Bavar.* tom. i. f. 378.

⁵ *Lutheri Op.* tom. i. f. 256, tom. ii. f. 313.

⁶ *Lutheri Lib. ad Waldenses*, ap. *Bellarminum*, de Purgat. lib. i. c. 2.

is procured by these impious offices."¹ So also Calvin, Chemnitz, and others.² They thus verified the vision by measuring the cherubim of the inner sanctuary, the symbols of the redeemed, who at death pass immediately into the presence of Christ in the heavenly temple.

VI. They learned from the sacred word, and proclaimed the truth symbolized by the priests and Levites, that they are legitimate offerers of the worship which God enjoins, who are publicly set apart to that office according to the directions given in the New Testament, and who fulfil the duties of the ministry as they are enjoined by the Spirit of inspiration, by preaching the gospel in its purity, and offering the homage to God through Christ which is due to him, in opposition to the arrogations of the apostate church, that none have authority to exercise the ministry unless invested by the pope, or an order of bishops, who are unknown to the New Testament.

It is the doctrine of papists that bishops alone have power to ordain to sacred offices, and that ordinations by them alone confer authority to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. "This holy synod declares that besides other ecclesiastical grades, bishops who succeeded to the apostles belong to the hierarchical order, and were appointed by the Holy Spirit to rule the church of God; that they are superior to presbyters, and have power to bestow the sacrament of confirmation, to ordain the ministers of the church, and perform many other things for which the inferior ranks have no power."³

"If any one shall say that bishops are not superior to presbyters, or have not the power of confirming and ordaining, or that the power which they have is common to them with presbyters, or that ordinations conferred by them without the call or consent of the people or secular authority are invalid, or that they who are not rightly ordained, nor sent by ecclesiastical and canonical power, but enter another way, are legitimate ministers of the word and sacraments, let him be accursed."⁴ And such had been the pretences of the hierarchies from the period of their nationalization in the fourth century.

But these arrogant claims were rejected by the Reformers. Luther, in his tract respecting the power of the Roman pontiff, not only denied the supremacy of the pope, his superiority to

¹ Syll. Confess. p. 95.

² Cal. Inst. lib. iii. c. v. s. 6. Chemnicii Exam. Concil. Trident. pr. iii. pp. 88-140.

³ Concil. Trident. sess. xxiii. de Sac. Ord. c. iv.

⁴ Concil. Trident. sess. xxiii. de Sac. Ord. can. vii.

other bishops, and the superiority of one bishop to another, but denounced the whole fabric of episcopacy as the mere work of men; and asserted that by the institution of Christ bishops and presbyters are equal. "It is the common opinion of the whole church, and is demonstrable from the letters of Cyprian, that every priest in a case of death or necessity, is a bishop and a pope, having the utmost plenitude of power in respect to the person making confession. The consequence follows therefore infallibly that a pope is not superior to bishops by divine right, nor a bishop to presbyters, inasmuch as a divine right is immutable as well in life as at death."¹ He held that all believers are priests, and that all the authority which they who are ordained, and exercise the ministry possess above other believers, is conferred by the church, and is merely ecclesiastical, not of divine right. "What if they should be forced to admit that all of us who have been baptized are priests, as we truly are; and although the ministry is by our consent committed to them alone, they should at the same time know, that they have no right of empire over us, except so far as we voluntarily allow it. For thus Peter, 'Ye are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a sacerdotal kingdom.' Wherefore all of us who are Christians are priests; and those whom we call priests are mere ministers chosen by us, who do all things in our name. And there is no other priesthood than a ministry. Thus Paul: 'Let a man esteem us as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God;' from which it follows that if one who is called to this office by the church, does not preach the word, he is not a priest; and that the sacrament of ordination is nothing else than a particular mode of electing a preacher."²

Melancthon likewise, while willing that episcopacy should be continued, yet held that it was merely of human, not of divine institution, denied the necessity of the confirmation of prelates by the pope, and asserted the legitimacy of ordination by presbyters. "The ordination of ministers of the gospel in our church, is legitimate according to Paul's direction to Titus to constitute presbyters in every city." "I know the adherents of the pontiff declaim fiercely that a consecration cannot be made by those who are not ordained by bishops, and that they are not bishops who are not confirmed by the Roman pontiff. But this papistical folly is refuted by the example of the oriental churches."³

¹ Lutheri de Potest. Rom. Pont. tom. i. f. 319.

² Lutheri de Captiv. Bab. tom. ii. ff. 232, 233.

³ Melancth. Respons. ad Bavar. Op. tom. i. f. 366, 367. Apol. Confess. f. 95

They held to the necessity of ordination. "We hold in respect to ecclesiastical ordinations, that no one should publicly teach in the church, or administer the sacraments; unless regularly called."¹ In like manner the churches of Switzerland: "One and the same power or office is given to all ministers in the church. It is certain that at the beginning bishops or presbyters governed the church by a common care. No one exalted himself over another, or usurped superiority or dominion over fellow-bishops."² So also the Belgic: "We believe that the church should be ruled by that polity which God has himself instituted in his word, namely, that it should have ministers who should preach and administer the sacraments; that its senate should consist of presbyters and deacons; and that they should be called to their office by a legitimate election by the church."³ So also Calvin: "In denominating those who rule the church, bishops, presbyters, pastors, and ministers without discrimination, I have followed the usage of the Scriptures, for they give the title of bishops to whoever exercised the ministry of the word."⁴ And such were the views universally of the Reformers of the sixteenth century. Their rejection alike of the claims of the pope to supremacy over all churches, and of bishops to superiority to presbyters, and sole right to induct into the sacred office, was as universal and conspicuous, as their rejection of the mass, indulgences, purgatory, or the celibacy of the clergy. They held that they were true and legitimate ministers, who, having been chosen by the churches, and inducted into the office by presbyters, preached the gospel in its purity. They who retained episcopacy, retained it as a human institution, not as of divine appointment.⁵

They thus fulfilled the vision by measuring the priests and Levites of the outer sanctuary, the symbols of the legitimate teachers and offerers of acceptable worship in the church under the gospel.

VII. They learned from the Scriptures and taught the truths symbolized by the outer sanctuary, that any place is appropriate for the offering of acceptable homage, from which the offerers of

¹ Confess. August. ap Syll. Conf. p. 127.

² Syll. Confess. p. 71.

³ Syll. Confess. xxx. xxxi. p. 347.

⁴ Cal. Inst. lib. iv. c. 3, s. 8-16.

⁵ See Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, chap. viii., in which numerous proofs of this fact are alleged from the Reformers and later divines of England and the continent. It was not till seventy years from the commencement of the Reformation that the doctrine of the divine right of episcopacy began to be advanced by Protestants. p. 394. Neal's *Hist. of the Puritans*, vol. i. pp. 480, 481.

worship and the worshippers look up to the heavenly sanctuary, and address their adoration and prayers to God through Christ, in opposition to the doctrine of the apostate church, that the only legitimate places of worship are edifices that are consecrated by superstitious rites, made the depositories of relics, and furnished with altars, shrines of martyrs, and the images of saints.

The Catholic canons require that even the grounds on which churches are erected should be devoted to God, in order that the edifices may be appropriated to his service. "That no church should be consecrated, nor sacrifice offered of the mass, except in places dedicated to God, unless in cases of the utmost necessity, is known to all who are aware of the commands of the Old and New Testament."¹ It was claimed that no edifices for worship should be erected without permission from the pope. "We are informed that some have ventured to erect basilicas and oratories without permission of the apostolic see."² It was held that no church newly erected should be dedicated without the authority of the supreme pontiff,³ and no one could build a church until the bishop of the diocese had marked out and consecrated the site by superstitious rites. "Let no one erect a church till the bishop of the city come and set up a cross on the site, and mark out the court; nor until he who desires to erect it have shown that he has appropriated sufficient means for the lights, care, and wages of the keepers of such a building. And after he has consecrated it, let him sprinkle the court with holy water."⁴ "No presbyter may erect another altar in a consecrated church unless it be dedicated or permitted by the bishop of the place, that there may be a discrimination between what is sacred and what is not."⁵

Churches were not to be consecrated without a deposite in them of relics. "We decree that a deposite of the relics of holy martyrs be made with the customary prayers in all churches that have been consecrated without them; and should a bishop hereafter consecrate a church without holy relics, let him be deposed as a transgressor of the ecclesiastical traditions."⁶

Images and pictures were required to be placed in all churches. "The image of Christ, of the virgin mother of God, and of other saints, are to be placed and preserved in the temples especially, and honored with due veneration."⁷

¹ Gratiani Decret. de Consecrat. Dist. i. c. i.

² Ibid. Dist. i. c. iv.

³ Ibid. Dist. i. c. v.

⁴ Ibid. Dist. i. c. ix.

⁵ Ibid. Dist. i. c. xxv.

⁶ Concil. Nicæni, ii. can. vii.; Labbei tom. xiii. p. 751. Van Espen, pr. ii. tit. xvi. c. iii. de Consecrat. Eccl.

⁷ Concil. Trident. sess. xxv. de Sac. Imag.

No church could be consecrated without the sacrifice of the mass. "All basilicas should be consecrated with the mass."¹ The mass was not to be offered in any except a consecrated place. "The solemnities of the mass are to be celebrated, not anywhere, but only in places consecrated by the bishop, or where he permits."² So also the capitulary of Charlemagne in the year 801. "Let no priest venture to celebrate mass in any other house or place than dedicated churches."³

But all these superstitions and idolatries were rejected by the Reformers. Images, pictures, and relics, were removed from the churches. Edifices were erected for public worship only because of their convenience, not that they are requisite to an acceptable homage; and the doctrine of the Scriptures taught and held that God is ever present with his people when they assemble for his worship, whether in temples, in private dwellings, or the open fields; and hears the accents of adoration and love from whatever station they are breathed, cottage or palace, the dungeon where his martyrs are chained, the deep glens and caverns of the mountains to which his witnesses have fled from their persecutors, or the towering structures which have been set apart for his homage, and in which his worshippers are assembled. "The Lutherans and Calvinists allow temples, but only for public teaching and the administration of the sacraments. They disapprove of their erection as mere oratories and in honor of saints, and of their being consecrated with peculiar rites, and decorated with expensive ornaments."⁴

"As believers are required to offer public prayer, temples are requisite for that purpose, nor is that, as some who would avoid worshipping with God's people pretend, inconsistent with the direction to enter into our closets. For in promising that he will do whatever two or three who are gathered together in his name shall ask, God shows that he is not averse from open and united prayer; only let ostentation and endeavors after vain-glory be avoided, and the affection be sincere. But if that be the legitimate use of temples, as it certainly is, care is again to be taken that we do not regard them as they were held in some ages, as the peculiar habitation of God, in which he listens to us most readily, or ascribe to them a secret and incomprehensible sanctity that renders prayer more holy."⁵

¹ Gratiani Decret. de Consecrat. Dist. i. c. iii.

² Ibid. Dist. i. c. xii. c. xv.

³ Capit. Reg. Franc. anno 801, can. ix. — anno 769, can. xiv. Tom. i. pp. 359, 192.

⁴ Bellarmini de Cultu Sanct. lib. iii. c. 1.

⁵ Cal. Inst. lib. iii. c. 20, s. 30.

They thus measured the outer sanctuary, as the symbol of the places in which acceptable worship is offered by the church under the gospel.

VIII. And finally, they complied with the direction to reject the court which was without, and measure it not, by representing the votaries of the apostate hierarchy as members of a false, not of a true church, and yet not assuming but that there were individuals in that communion who were true worshippers of God.

Thus Calvin: "It will clearly appear what place we are to assign to those churches which are under the tyranny of the Roman idol, if we compare them with the ancient Israelitish church, as it is described by the prophets. A true church subsisted among the Jews as long as they adhered to the laws of the covenant; that is, as they retained through the favor of God those things by which a church consists. They had the true doctrine, in the law and its ministry by priests and prophets. They were initiated by circumcision, and disciplined by other sacraments to the confirmation of faith; and there is no doubt but that the benedictions which God pronounces on the church were applicable to their society. But after having turned from the law of the Lord, and degenerated to superstition and idolatry, they lost in a degree that prerogative. For who on the one hand will venture to deny the title of the church to those among whom God establishes the preaching of his word and the observation of the sacraments; or who on the other will dare to denominate that assembly, without any limitation, a church, in which the word of God is openly and with impunity trodden under foot, and its ministry, the chief nerve and soul as it were of the church, extinguished? As then some peculiar prerogatives of the church remained among the Jews, so we would not deny to the papal such traces of the church as God pleases should survive among them. He having once established his covenant with the Jews, it continued to subsist by its own strength, not by their preserving it. His faithfulness was not annihilated by their perfidy, nor circumcision so polluted by their impious hands, but that it was still a sign and seal of the covenant; whence he denominated the children that were born to them his, although they were not such except of special grace. So when he had established his covenant in Gaul, Italy, Germany, Spain, England, in order that it might continue inviolable while those provinces were oppressed by the tyranny of antichrist, he first preserved baptism there, the witness of the covenant, which being consecrated by his own lips, retained its force notwithstanding man's impiety: and

next, he also preserved there a remnant that the church might not absolutely expire." "While then we are not willing to concede the title of a church to the papists without a limitation, we yet do not deny that there are churches among them, but contend only in respect to the true and legitimate constitution of a church, which is required in order to a communion of sacraments, and in a still higher degree of doctrine. The prophets predicted that antichrist was to seat himself in the temple of God. We regard the Roman pontiff as the head of that abominable kingdom. That his seat was to be placed in the temple of God, implies that his kingdom was to be such as still to retain the name of Christ and the church; and hence it appears we are not to deny that churches still remain under his tyranny, although he has profaned them with a sacrilegious impiety, afflicted them with a savage domination, and corrupted and almost exterminated them by deadly doctrines and poisonous potions; and Christ lies half sepulchred in them, the gospel is buried, piety driven away, and the worship of God almost abolished."¹ And similar views were entertained by Luther, Melancthon, and the Reformers generally.² They thus cast out the outer court as occupied generally by apostates, and yet did not attempt to determine but that some of those who were in it, were true worshippers.

The prophecy had thus in all these relations the most conspicuous fulfilment. The great and peculiar truths of the Scriptures which were proclaimed by the Reformers, are precisely those symbolized by the temple, the altar, and the offerers of worship; while the great errors and idolatries of the apostate church which they rejected, are precisely the opposite of those truths which the false prophet had substituted in their place.

The prediction respecting the treading of the holy city by the Gentiles during twelve hundred and sixty days, and the prophecy of the witnesses in sackcloth, have also had a conspicuous fulfilment.

That period commenced at the close of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century, on the conversion of the Gothic princes and nations to the faith of the Catholic church. The Greek and Latin communions had in that age openly apostatized from God, ascribing his rights as lawgiver to men, and paying the worship due only to him, to creatures, to relics, to images, and to imaginary existences; and they have continued and advanced in that

¹ Cal. Inst. lib. iv. c. ii. s. 7, 11, 12.

² Confess. August. art. viii. op. Melaneth. tom. i. f. 29. Apol. Confess. de Eccl. tom. i. f. 79, 80.

apostasy through all the ages that have followed. On the other hand, at every period of that long night of idolatry and persecution, God raised up a few witnesses both teachers and recipients of their doctrine, who proclaimed and vindicated the truth in opposition to those errors, and denounced the judgments which God has threatened to inflict on the idolatrous church and persecuting civil rulers. Such conspicuously were many of the Paulicians, the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Lollards, the Bohemians; and such have been vast numbers of Protestants of the last three hundred years.

The symbolization of the olive trees and the lamps was verified in them. They were dissentients from the nationalized Greek and Latin churches, held separate assemblies, had teachers of their own appointment, and offered a peculiar worship. They fulfilled their office also in sackcloth, under a profound sense of the rights of God, in humiliation for their sins, and in grief at the dishonor of his name by apostates. They were persecuted in every age, from the seventh to the nineteenth century. And their great and peculiar teachings were in vindication of the rights of God, in assertion of the work of Christ as sole Redeemer and intercessor, and in denunciation of the idolatrous homage of relics, saints, and images, and the false doctrines of the apostate church respecting the priesthood, the sacraments, celibacy, fasting, and purgatory.

That there were persons at the period of the conversion of the ten kingdoms, who testified against the worship of images as idolatrous, is apparent from the letters of Gregory the Great, in 599 and 601. On hearing that Serenus, the bishop of Marseilles, had broken those in his church, because he saw they were made objects of adoration, he wrote to him disapproving of their destruction, and recommending that they should be used as pictures were in the churches, for the instruction of such as were unable to read the histories of the saints. But the counsel was deemed so unevangelical by Serenus, that he doubted the genuineness of the letter, and wrote to Gregory to learn if he were its author.¹

That there were many, both in the eastern and western empire in the eighth century, who rejected the worship of images, is manifest from the council of Constantinople in 754, in which it was denounced as idolatrous;² and from the protestation of Charlemagne and the prelates of France against the legalization

¹ Gregorii M. Epist. 105, lib. ix. Ind. ii.; Ep. 13, lib. xi. Ind. iv.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xiii. p. 323.

of their worship by the second council of Nicæa in 787.¹ Neither of those bodies, however, can be considered as among the witnesses denoted by the text, as notwithstanding their disapprobation of images, they were addicted to the veneration of relics, and the invocation of saints, and arrogated to themselves the right of legislation over the church, and justified it in their predecessors. They render it credible nevertheless that there were persons who rejected the whole system of false doctrines and idolatrous rites of the age, the error and impiety of which were as apparent as of the adoration of images. And of the existence of such from the seventh century through all the ages that followed, there are adequate proofs.

There arose in Armenia about the middle of the seventh century, a body of Christians denominated Paulicians, who, withdrawing from the nationalized church, rejected the usurpations, false doctrines, and idolatries of the hierarchies, and continued to utter a testimony to the truth for two centuries in the east, and subsequently in Bulgaria, Illyria, Bohemia, Italy, and France, to the dawn of the Reformation.

I. They regarded God as the sole lawgiver of the church, held the New Testament in the highest estimation, and made it the rule of their faith, taught that it was to be studied by the people as well as by the ministers of the church, and accused the priests of the Greek communion of the grossest violation of the divine will, in withholding it from the laity.

“They receive the words of the Lord, of the apostles also, and the other writings, I mean the Acts of the Apostles and the Catholic epistles, except those ascribed to Peter; for they do not receive them literally.” “Even the Acts of the Apostles and the Catholic epistles are reckoned with the gospels by a part of them only, not by all.”²

“Therefore this new sprout from those old seeds, neither approves nor regards the writings of the Manichean teachers, but deceitfully pretends to hold to those only in which the words of the Lord are written, and the epistles of the great apostle Paul, and by some the Acts of the Apostles, and the Catholic epistles, except those of Peter, and they affect to appropriate them to themselves, that they may easily deceive the unlearned.”³

“The Paulician woman, when she first conversed with Sergius, asked him, Why do you not read the gospels? And he, the

¹ Dupin, N. Biblioth. in Charlemagne, vol. vi. pp. 134–138.

² Photii contra Manich. lib. i. c. 8, ap. J. C. Wolfii Anecd. Græc. pp. 27, 28.

³ Photii contra Manich. lib. i. pp. 56, 57.

apostasy not having yet pervaded his heart, replied, 'A laic is not allowed freely to read the sacred oracles, for that work is assigned to the priests.' The infuriate woman retorted—'It is irrational to cherish such a scrupulousness in regard to them; for there is no respect of persons with God. He wishes all to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. But that you are to regard the divine word with such awe, is not from a care for its honor. Instead, it is the artifice of your priests, who, desiring to make a traffic of it, wish to keep you ignorant of its mysteries. It is for that reason that they restrain you from reading it, and only allow you to become hearers when they have separated that which they are to read from its connection and torn it to pieces.'"¹

II. They rejected the Greek hierarchy of bishops, and their usurped right of legislation over the church. They had but two orders of ministers, and never attempted to enforce the reception of their doctrines by mere human authority. "They do not receive the presbyters of the Catholic church, nor the other priests, because they say the priests and presbyters of the people constituted the council against Christ. On the contrary, they denominate those who hold the place of priests among them, not priests, but companions in travel, and notaries. Those orders, however, exhibit nothing different from the multitude in dress, diet, or any thing else that is a mark of dignity."² They held no councils; their clergy enacted no decrees or canons; they appealed to no authority but the word of God for their doctrines; and are represented as having in all instances, when arraigned by their persecutors, offered that as the reason of their faith.

III. They rejected the worship of the cross. "Then followed another question, Why do you not worship and embrace the cross of Christ? The Paulician again subjected him who does not worship the living cross to a curse, by the cross, meaning Christ himself, who formed, he said, the figure of the cross by the extension of his arms."³ "The gospels which we have, they do not hesitate to venerate, not indeed where the figure of the cross is delineated, but on the other parts of the volume where no image of the cross is drawn, and they reverence the book, they say, because it contains the words of the Lord."⁴ "But the literal cross, which they say was wood, the implement of injustice, and the subject of a curse, they hold ought not to be worshipped and kissed."⁵

¹ Photii contra Manich. lib. i. pp. 100-102.

³ Ibid. lib. i. p. 79.

⁴ Ibid. lib. i. pp. 32, 33.

² Ibid. lib. i. pp. 31, 32.

⁵ Ibid. lib. i. p. 23.

IV. They rejected in like manner the worship of saints. "In addition to these questions he asked, Why do you not honor the holy mother of God with due homage and worship? And he, continuing his manner, denounced an anathema against those who do not venerate the holy mother of God, adding that he embraced and venerated that into which our Lord Jesus Christ entered, and from which he came, the New Jerusalem, the mother of us all."¹ "And blaspheming our most holy queen the mother of God, these men worthy not once, but thrice of destruction, do not fear to say what is neither fit to be written, nor heard: we believe in the most holy mother of God into which the Lord entered, meaning the New Jerusalem, and saying into that Christ our forerunner has entered for us."²

V. They rejected the doctrine of the age respecting the eucharist, which represented it as the real body and blood of Christ, ascribed to it a sanctifying power, and taught that its reception was necessary at death in order to absolution. "A fourth question was proposed to him: 'Why do you insult and contemn the spotless and fearful body and blood of Christ our God, and not endure to partake of them?' And the thrice wicked again struck with an anathema him who treats with dishonor the body and blood of Christ, and lives without partaking them—understanding by the body and blood, not what our Lord has taught us to *call* the body and blood, but instead the Lord's words"—that is undoubtedly, not the bread and wine, but that which the Lord employed them to represent.³

Photius, indeed, asserts that they did not partake the bread and wine, but it is obviously a misrepresentation, as he alleges in the same passage that they affirmed they received the body and blood, ascribing a wonderful or spiritual meaning to Christ's words, Take ye, eat; which is the manner in which they would have expressed themselves, had they contemplated the elements simply as the representatives of his body and blood, and regarded themselves as receiving him in those symbols only in a spiritual sense, not literally, as was held by the Greeks. He accordingly affirms, on a subsequent page, that many of them partook of the eucharist with the Greeks, though he asserts it was merely to deceive the simple.⁴

He accuses them also of rejecting baptism, and yet admits that by the rejection which he ascribes to them, he means only that they assigned to the rite an office or import different from that

¹ Photii contra Manich. lib. i. pp. 79, 80.

² Ibid. lib. i. pp. 20, 21.

³ Ibid. lib. i. pp. 80, 81.

⁴ Ibid. lib. i. p. 30.

ascribed to it by the Greek church, which held it to be accompanied by the renovating influences of the Spirit, and to secure the forgiveness of all antecedent sins. He allows that they baptized, but denied that the rite or the sign of the cross was efficacious to the purification of the soul.¹

To this view of their doctrines and character, it is objected that Photius also represents them as holding the Manichean dogma of two principles. But that is most obviously a false accusation, as he as well as his cotemporary Petrus Siculus, who also assailed them with that charge, admits that they never openly taught or avowed Manicheism, that they pronounced the imputation of that impious system to them wholly unjust, that they specifically disowned and rejected all the works and all the doctrines of Manes; and that they received the New Testament as the word of God, and made it the sole rule of their faith;—acknowledgments wholly inconsistent with that charge. The Manicheans never professed to found their dogmas on the New Testament. Such a pretence had been preposterous in the extreme, as they are directly opposed to all the great doctrines of the gospel. Instead, they openly rejected the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, and substituted forged gospels and other supposititious writings in their place, as the oracles of their system. As that imputation by his own representation cannot have been founded on any express avowal by them of Manicheism, it must either have been built like the false charge that they rejected the eucharist and baptism, on a mere perversion of the language in which they expressed some truth, or been the work of sheer and malignant misrepresentation. That a specific and formal profession of a truth, and in the language of the Scriptures and of the church, was no obstacle to his accusing them of rejecting it, is apparent from his charging them with a rejection of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit by the ascription of an impious meaning to the terms, although he allows that they acknowledged the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and anathematized those who denied them.² On the principle on which he proceeds in that imputation, it would be impossible for a witness for God ever to vindicate himself from the most gratuitous and atrocious calumny. Of what significance is an ingenuous and faithful profession of the truth,—of what avail are innocence, faith, and fidelity to God, if the accuser is at liberty, without a particle of evidence, and against the most resistless demonstra-

¹ Photii contra Manich. lib. i. pp. 29, 30. ² Ibid. lib. i. pp. 18, 19.

tion, to assume that the accused use the language of truth in a false and impious sense? When the traducers and persecutors of the children of God find themselves obliged to resort to such pretences to justify themselves, it indicates that they are without any legitimate grounds of accusation, and bespeaks a majestic innocence and dignity in the objects of their malice.

But by his own admission the Paulicians gave the most decisive and stupendous proofs of their sincerity in the profession of the gospel, and rejection of the impious system ascribed to them. He acknowledges that the effort was made to extort from them an avowal of Manicheism, by the threat and the infliction of confiscation, imprisonment, exile, torture, and death, and yet, with scarce an exception, without success. They inflexibly maintained their profession of the truth, when stretched upon the gibbet, when chained to the stake, when precipitated into the waves, when subjected to every species of outrage and promiscuously slaughtered by a ferocious soldiery, and when driven from their burning villages and cities to the forests and mountains to perish of hunger and cold. That the experiment was made on a vast scale he admits, and is apparent from the long period through which they were persecuted, and the multitudes that were put to death.¹ What more decisive and stupendous proofs could they possibly have given of their sincerity? The very endeavor to force them by those terrible inflictions to acknowledge themselves Manicheans, demonstrates that no public evidences existed that they were such. It is from the suspected and accused only, not the openly and indisputably guilty, that men attempt to extort confessions by the scourge and the rack.

And finally, Photius refutes his pretence that they concealed their Manicheism, in order to escape the punishments which the laws denounced against the disciples of that system, by relating that they were still put to death, and in vast crowds, and almost without exception, through one hundred and fifty years, notwithstanding their uniform disavowal of the doctrines of Manes. As the denial yielded them no exemption, and was found to yield

¹ Theodora attempted in 845 either to convert or to exterminate them, and her generals undertook to accomplish her wishes by the cross, the sword, and the waters. One hundred thousand were sacrificed in those forms in a single campaign. "Porro Theodora ut refert Porphyrogeneta, Paulicianos quoque per Orientem conatur ad veram transferre fidem, sin minus extirpare, ac de medio tollere: quæ res ingentibus malis Romanum orbem implevit. Mittet itaque in eam rem procerum quosdam ac magistratum. Erant illi Algiri Ducisque filii et Sudales. Hi alios in crucem agebant, alios gladio cædebant, alios mari profundo mergebant. Sublati ad centum millia ejusce generis supplicii; publicata substantia ac fisco illata. Pagi Crit. in Bar. anno 845, no. iv.

them none by so vast a trial, it is absurd to ascribe their persisting in it, to a hope thereby of escaping torture and death. As they had only to abandon their own sect and join the Greek church to escape destruction, as is seen from his own narrative, if they had chosen to consult their safety by falsehood, they would most surely have selected that course, which was a compliance with the laws of their persecutors, not a violation of them, and was attended with security and rewards, not dishonor and punishment. Their persistence in the profession of the gospel, and rejection alike of Manicheism and the superstitions and idolatries of the nationalized church, are explicable, therefore, on no other supposition, than that they were ingenuous and faithful witnesses of Christ.

But why, if they were not Manicheans, were they thus accused by prelates and princes of holding that infamous system, and put to death on that ground in vast multitudes through a long succession of ages? The answer is at once a sublime vindication of their innocence, and a stupendous proof of the ruthless falsehood and malignity of their persecutors. It was because by the laws of the empire, to hold the doctrines of Manes was a capital offence, and was punished by infamy, confiscation, exile, and death.¹ They were falsely accused, because no just ground existed of accusation against them. They were accused of Manicheism, because that was in every relation the most infamous of heresies, had been capitally punished from the days of Theodosius, swept their goods into the treasury, intercepted them from spreading their doctrines, gratified the pride, tyranny, and malice of the prelates whose power was endangered by their teachings, and was adapted to deter others from following their example. That such was the real and sole reason of the imputation, is manifest from the whole history of the persecution, and is confirmed by the fact that wherever the Theodosian and Justinian codes became a part of the civil and ecclesiastical law, the same imputation continued often in the ages that followed to the dawn of the Reformation, to be cast on such as dissented from the nationalized church, however scriptural were their doctrines, however virtuous their lives, and however notorious the falsehood of the accusation. It was on that ground that the Albigenes, the Poor Men of Lyons, the Cathari, the Publicani and others, were through four centuries swept to the grave by thousands and myriads.

Nor was the false accusation, and wanton slaughter of the faith-

¹ Photii contra Manich. lib. i. pp. 63, 64. Cod. Theod. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 9.

ful witnesses of God, in violation in any degree of the principles of the nationalized church, but was in conformity with its system of usurpation and tyranny, and made obligatory by its canons. The early councils sentenced all dissentients from the nationalized church to excommunication and infamy, and those of a later age enjoined it on all as a duty to assail, harass, and persecute them. To calumniate, abuse, rob, outrage, and even wantonly murder them, without the forms of law, was accordingly considered a positive virtue, and became a fashionable mode of displaying an ardent zeal for the church.¹

After a long period of persecution in Armenia, a colony of the Paulicians was transplanted by the emperor in 755 into Thrace. Another body followed in the tenth century; and they soon passed from Thrace into Bulgaria, Illyria, Italy, Germany, and France, propagated their doctrines through those countries, and continued to fulfil the office of witnesses amidst the fires of persecution, through all the ages that followed to the fifteenth century.²

There were in the west also, in the valleys of Piedmont and the south of Gaul, bodies of dissentients from the apostate church, that fulfilled that office still more conspicuously, and suffered similar persecution. They seem in France to have first attracted the attention of the Catholic hierarchy and civil government, at the beginning of the eleventh century. Glaber, an annalist of the period, relates that in the year 1017, a strange sect was discovered at Orleans, which had long grown in secret, and drawn many into its toils, not only of the weak and simple, but of the more learned also of the clergy, among whom were two distinguished for birth and intelligence, and in high esteem at the court. On their dissent from the Catholic faith becoming known, an inquisition was instituted by the king, the nobles, and the clergy, and ten ecclesiastics, and three laics avowing their rejection of the doctrines and rites of the Catholic church which were without authority from the Scriptures, and refusing to recant, were committed to the flames. Others of the same faith were at the same period detected and put to death at Toulouse and many other places in the west.³

They are admitted by their enemies to have dissented from the doctrines of the Catholic church, on the ground that they were not the doctrines of revelation; and to have rejected the homage or superstitious regard of the cross, the invocation of

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xxiii. pp. 715-724.

² Mosheim, Hist. Church, vol. ii. pp. 66-72 and 223-228. Gibbon's Hist. c. liv.

³ Baronii Annal. an. 1017, No. 3. Natalis Alexandri Hist. Eccl. tom. vi. p. 475.

saints, the doctrine of the transubstantiation of the eucharist and of regeneration by baptism, and the theory which Catholics held of the church. It is acknowledged also that they had existed for a long time, had spread through a large part of France, and were very numerous. They must undoubtedly, therefore, have subsisted for several generations, and there is nothing in the narrative inconsistent with the supposition that they were descendants of those in that part of Gaul, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, who are known from the examples of Vigilantius, Sernus, and others, to have rejected the homage of images, relics, and saints.

In 1025, another party was detected at Cambray in Belgic Gaul, who denied the Roman Catholic doctrine of baptismal regeneration, transubstantiation, and purgatory, rejected the sacraments of penance and ordination, the invocation of martyrs, the homage of the cross, and the veneration of images, of temples, and altars; while, on the other hand, they held the Scriptural doctrine, there is reason to believe, of justification by faith. They were seized and tried by a synod, and are said to have at length assented to the doctrine of the church as expounded by the bishop, a portion of which respecting the necessity of renovation by the Holy Spirit is evangelical.¹

Through a large part of the eleventh century, Berenger assailed the doctrine of transubstantiation, and denounced the Catholic church as apostate, and induced great numbers throughout Italy, France, and England to embrace his views;² and in 1126, Peter de Bruis, a distinguished teacher of the Albigenses, commenced a laborious and successful ministry of near twenty years, during which he assailed the errors of the church of Rome, and taught the gospel to great numbers throughout Gascony, Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphiny, and for his evangelical testimony was in 1147 consigned to the flames. He denied the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, the transubstantiation of the eucharistic elements, and the necessity of temples, churches, and other places consecrated by superstitious rites, in order to an acceptable worship, denounced the adoration of the cross, and rejected masses, prayers, and alms for the dead.³ The third canon of the council of Toulouse in 1219, against those who rejected the peculiar doctrines and rites of the Catholics, shows that

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xix. pp. 423-459.

² Baronii Annal. an. 1004, 1059, 1079. Faber's ancient Vallenses and Albigenses, p. 158.

³ Baronii Annal. in an. 1126, No. 14, 15, 16.

there were many at that period in the south of France who continued to fulfil the office of witnesses.¹

Peter de Bruis was followed by Henry, whose numerous disciples were from him denominated Henricians, and whose doctrine in respect to the eucharist, Baronius acknowledges was the same as that adopted by the Sacramentarians of the sixteenth century.² Bernard represents them as rejecting the dogma of the mass and baptismal regeneration.³

Near the same period, about thirty persons entertaining those views emigrated from Gascony to England for the purpose of teaching their doctrines, and being seized, condemned, and delivered to the magistrates for punishment, were branded, scourged, and driven out without shelter to perish with the cold.⁴

In 1176, a number of the Albigenses denominated good men, were arraigned before a council of bishops and princes at Lombers, in the province of Toulouse, in which it is reported there were many of the sect. They made an evangelical confession, and were condemned as heretics.⁵ At the instance of the pope, others again were arraigned in 1178, and condemned.⁶ A crusade was excited against them by the pontiff in 1204, and a war waged against them by princes and inquisitors for fifty years, during which multitudes of both sexes were slain by the French troops, and great numbers consigned to the flames, their cities and villages burned, their property seized, and the remnant driven into the neighboring countries.⁷

These persecuted dissentients were undoubtedly true witnesses of Christ. They were indeed denounced by those who arraigned and put them to death as Manicheans, and the charge has been repeated by moderns, but it is unsupported by any credible testimony, and is refuted by their accusers themselves. In the first place, it is admitted by the authors of that charge, that they were not accustomed openly to avow the doctrine of Manes, and asserted that they disguised and concealed their faith in it, and propagated it only by stealth. There was by their own acknowledgment, therefore, no public evidence that they held that doctrine. Secondly, it is admitted that when accused as the disciples of Manes, they promptly and solemnly repelled the charge as a wanton calumny. Thirdly, it is acknowledged that they pro-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xxi. pp. 226, 227.

² Baronii Annal. an. 1147, No. xviii.

³ Bernardi Epist. 241, tom. i. p. 237.

⁴ Lingard's Hist. Engl. vol. ii. chap. v. pp. 420, 421.

⁵ Baronii Annal. an. 1176, No. iii.-xiv.

⁶ Ibid. 1178, No. xvii.-xxvii.

⁷ Raynaldi Annal. an. 1204, No. 58-65. Thuani Hist. Præf. tom. i. p. 7, lib. vi. pp. 185-187.

fessed doctrines of the gospel, and were addicted to customs which are wholly irreconcilable with Manicheism. And finally, it is admitted that multitudes maintained this confession under tortures and the threat of a cruel death, and sealed it with their blood. By the concession of their accusers, therefore, there is all the evidence from the Albigenses themselves, that we could naturally have, that the imputation was wholly false. No stronger facts can be conceived, than that they never openly taught Manicheism, that they never owned it as their faith, that they solemnly disowned it, and finally that they professed the doctrines of the gospel which are most formally opposed to it, and contradicted its discipline by their daily and settled practice.

On the other hand, there is all the evidence that could naturally exist, that their persecutors charged them with Manicheism with a perfect consciousness that the imputation was false, and for the purpose of rendering them objects of detestation to the people and princes, and procuring their death. That was, in the first place, in accordance with their principles. All who were condemned as heretics were expressly sentenced by the councils and popes to infamy, and Catholics were required to treat them as detestable, without virtue, without decency, the vassals of Satan, and ministers of impiety and profligacy.¹ It was thence in their judgment not only lawful, but a virtue, to calumniate and abuse dissenters from the national church, by every imputation that could display their zeal or gratify their malice. To have acknowledged that those who rejected their religion as apostate, and whom they condemned as heretics, were yet believers of all that God teaches in his word, and adorned with all the virtues,—sobriety, justice, goodness, truth, purity, piety—that ever distinguish the worshippers of God, had been to condemn themselves.

It being thus in accordance with their principles to impute to the Albigenses whatever doctrines and vices would render them odious, the reason that they charged them with Manicheism rather than any other heretical doctrine was, as in respect to the Paulicians in the Greek empire, that by the Theodosian and Justinian codes, which as far as they relate to religion were adopted by the princes of France and the church at large as a part of the

¹ Those who were called heretics were prohibited by the Council of Laodicea from entering churches, excluded from all religious assemblies, and debarred from marriage with Catholics. By the Council of Antioch the excommunicated also were excluded from all religious assemblies; and it soon became customary formally to sentence them to infamy. Labbei Concil. tom. ii. pp. 565, 1310.

canon law, the belief of that system was made a capital offence, and had for ages been punished by confiscation, deprivation of the right of bequeathing and inheriting property, exile, and in some cases death;¹ and that it was the only false system that had been uniformly visited with those extreme penalties. To condemn the Albigenses as Manicheans, therefore, was to prepare the way, on the one hand, not only for the confiscation of their property, but the destruction of their lives; and on the other, to place the princes under a necessity, by their own laws, of inflicting those punishments. Had they refused to execute the mandates of the bishops, they would thereby have rendered themselves obnoxious to discipline, excommunication, accusation as heretics, deposition from office, and extermination by fire and sword. This is not mere conjecture, but indisputable truth. The enactments of the Theodosian and Justinian codes were expressly alleged by the third council of Lateran in 1179, as the reason of their delivering the Albigenses and others to the civil power for punishment;² and the fourth Lateran, in 1215, threatened all princes who refused to exterminate them, with excommunication, and unless they gave satisfaction to the church within a year, with deprivation of authority and the loss of their estates.³

¹ Codicis Theod. tom. vi. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 3, 7, 9, 18, 35, 38, 40, 41, 64, 65.

² "Although the church in its discipline is contented with a sacerdotal sentence, and does not inflict a bloody vengeance, yet it has the aid of the laws of the Catholic princes, so that men, often from the fear of corporeal punishment, seek the saving remedy"—of reconciliation. Sicut ait beatus Leo, licet ecclesiastica disciplina sacerdotali contenta iudicio, cruentas non efficiat ultiones; Catholicorum tamen principum constitutionibus adjuvatur, ut sæpe quærant homines salutare remedium, dum corporali super se metuunt evenire supplicium. They therefore subject the Cathari, Patarini, Publicani, and all others of their sentiments residing in Albigense, Toulouse, Gascony, and other places to an anathema, and prohibit their being received into houses, retained as tenants, or admitted to any commercial transactions. Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. p. 232. It is so indisputable that it was on the statutes of those codes against the Manicheans that the church proceeded in that bloody crusade against the Albigenses, that it is admitted even by their great calumniator Bossuet. "If any ask what kind of edicts those were of the princes by which the third Lateran Council professes the church was assisted, we answer, the edicts of the ancient emperors against heretics, contained in the codes of Theodosius and Justinian," and especially the fourth and fifth laws^a under the title heretics in the Justinian code, which constitute Manicheism a capital crime, and consign those who embrace it to persecution. Defens. Decl. Cler. Gall. pr. i. lib. iv. c. 3, p. 333. And that it was the settled policy of the prelates thus to accuse those who denounced their usurpations and idolatries, is seen from the fact that Manicheism was imputed to classes of widely differing dissentients for many ages, and made the ground of consigning them to death.

³ Si vero dominus temporalis requisitus et monitus ab ecclesia, terram suam purgare neglexerit ab hac hæretica fœditate, per metropolitanum et ceteros comprovinciales episcopos excommunicationis vinculo innodetur. Et si satisfacere contempserit

It was thus in perfect consistency with the avowed principles of the Catholics that they falsely accused the Albigenses, and that they chose to defame them by the imputation of Manichæism, rather than any other heretical doctrine. Their imputation to them, therefore, of that monstrous system, constitutes no evidence whatever that they entertained it.

But the Waldenses residing in the Alpine valleys of Piedmont, were a still more important body of witnesses. They appear first to have drawn the attention of the papal court in the latter part of the twelfth century, at the commencement of the violent persecution of the Albigenses, but are admitted by Catholic writers to have subsisted there from a much earlier age. Thus Reincrius, an inquisitor, who wrote about the year 1254, and had once belonged to the Catharist church, denominating them Leonists, represents their sect as of greater age than any other, its origin being referred by some to the times of the apostles; and as more generally diffused than any other, being found in almost every country.¹ Pilichdorf, a writer near the close of the next century, represents them as affirming that they had subsisted from the time of pope Sylvester, in the fourth century.² Claude Scyssel, archbishop of Turin, who wrote about the beginning of the sixteenth century, also states that their origin was referred by some of their writers to the same period;³ and such is the representation of all the principal Waldensians, who have since written their history.

They are the church, undoubtedly, symbolized by the woman who fled into the desert to be nourished there through twelve hundred and sixty days; and began their retreat thither soon after the nationalization of the church by Constantine and his successors, and attempt to compel the pure worshippers to acquiesce in their usurpations and idolatries, and remained in seclusion uncontaminated by the superstition and profligacy which debased the churches of Italy, Africa, the north of Gaul, Germany, England, and Spain, during the long period from the conversion of the Gothic nations till near the completion of the image or subjugation of the Catholic church out of the Italian patriarchate to the dominion of the papacy in the eleventh century, and commencement of the war of that tyrannical and bloody power on

infra annum, significetur hoc summo pontifice, ut extunc ipse vassallos ab ejus fidelitate denunciaret absolutos, et terram exponat Catholicis occupandam, qui eam exterminatis hæreticis sine ulla contradictione possideant. Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. p. 987.

¹ Faber's *Ancient Vallenses*, p. 273.

² *Ibid.* p. 275.

³ *Ibid.* p. 276.

the witnesses of Jesus wherever they were found throughout the western empire.

How early they began to send out missionaries to propagate their doctrines is not known. There were, from 1050 to 1250, great numbers of Paulicians, Publicani, Albigenses, and other dissentient preachers of the gospel throughout Lombardy, France, and Germany, and not improbably many bearing those names were Waldenses. In 1179 several of the disciples of Peter Waldo, of Lyons, a Waldensian emigrant, applied to pope Alexander III. to license their preachers in the missions in which they were already engaged, and in which they probably met obstructions from prelates and princes. They desired a license, doubtless, simply as a protection from persecution, not because they regarded themselves as unauthorized to preach without the pope's permission. From that period they and their converts at Lyons sent missionaries in great numbers throughout Italy, France, and Germany, and soon drew the notice of the papal court; were persecuted through near four hundred years, and fulfilled the office of witnesses with a fidelity and constancy worthy of the disciples of Jesus. Several of their works which still survive, that were undoubtedly written as early as the twelfth or thirteenth century, present the most decisive evidence on the one hand that they held the great truths of the gospel, and on the other, rejected the false system of the Catholic church. In their treatise of Antichrist, written probably in the thirteenth century, they exhibit the errors and idolatries of the papacy as the great characteristics of that apostate.

His first work they say is, that the homage which is due only to God, he perverts to himself, to departed saints, their images and relics, and to the eucharist, which he worships equally with God and Christ. His next work is that he robs Christ of his merits, and imputes regeneration, sanctification, and remission to his own authority. His third work is that he ascribes regeneration which is wrought by the Holy Spirit to the mere rite of baptism. His fourth, that he resolves the whole of religion into the mass. His fifth is avarice and ambition. His sixth an official allowance and license of sin. His seventh the employment of the secular power to compel a reception of his apostate doctrines and idolatrous rites; and his eighth, that he hates and persecutes the disciples of Christ.¹

This testimony against the false doctrines, idolatrous worship, and impious tyranny of the nationalized church, they uttered

¹ Faber's *Ancient Vallenses*, pp. 379-384.

still more emphatically in the thirteenth century. They are represented by Pilichdorf as teaching that God alone should be praised and invoked, as holding that the saints do not intercede for us nor acquire a title to blessings except for themselves, as rejecting the imaginary sanctity of churches and cemeteries consecrated by superstitious rites and the presence of relics, and discarding indulgences, pilgrimages, the mass, purgatory, the worship of images, and the veneration of the cross, and denouncing the pope as the head of apostates.¹

These doctrines they continued to maintain through the ages that followed. Claude Scyssel represents that they regarded the Scriptures as the only rule of faith, denied the right of synods to legislate over the divine laws, and thence ascribed no authority to the decrees and sentences of prelates; that they placed their sole reliance on Christ for salvation, denounced the Romish church as the great harlot and mistress of all errors, denied the power of the priest to forgive sins, and rejected the mass, the worship of saints and images, the homage of relics, transubstantiation, purgatory, and the consecration of places by pagan and idolatrous rites.² Such is the testimony also of Thuanus.³

By the confession thus of their enemies, their testimony against the errors and idolatries of the antichristian church was for several centuries before the Reformation as clear and emphatic as that which was at that period uttered by the Protestants themselves; and they have continued to adhere to the truth without variation through every subsequent age, while the Lutheran and Reformed churches on the continent have either apostatized to a false faith, or turned to infidelity.

A similar testimony to the truth was uttered by the Wickliffites, Lollards, and Bohemians in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It was as characteristic almost of those dissentients, as it was of Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, and their followers, that they held the Scriptures to be the only rule of faith, and relied on the sacrifice of Christ for salvation in contradistinction from rites and works, denounced the pope as the man of sin, and the Roman church as apostate, condemned the homage of saints, images, and relics, and rejected the mass.

There is thus satisfactory evidence that apart from the Paulicians during the period in which they fulfilled their office in the eastern empire, there have been two lines of teachers and recipients of the word of God who have maintained its truth in opposition

¹ Faber's *Ancient Vallenses*, pp. 415-420.

² *Ibid.* pp. 424-431.

³ Thuanus *Hist. lib. vi. tom. i. pp. 185-189, lib. xxvii. tom. ii. pp. 13, 14, 15.*

to antichrist, and in great numbers sealed their testimony with their blood ;—the Waldenses in Piedmont, and the Albigenses in France, until their dispersion in the thirteenth century, and subsequently their disciples and successors, the Wicklifites, Lollards, Bohemians, and Protestants.

It is no proof that these dissentients from the apostate church were not the witnesses of God, that they fulfilled their office but inadequately, that their views on the subjects of their testimony were often imperfect, and that they fell on others into errors. It was not necessary in order to their being witnesses, that they should understand and proclaim all truth, or be wholly free from imperfections. Such qualifications no uninspired teacher ever possessed. It was enough to constitute them witnesses, that they understood in a good degree and proclaimed the great truths which indisputably formed the peculiar subjects of their teachings, and that they denounced the opposite errors of the apostate worshippers.

And finally, the civil and ecclesiastical rulers whom they thus denounced, endeavored to injure and destroy them, assailed them with obloquy, trampled them down with oppression, subjected them to the most cruel torture, and put myriads and millions of them to death in the most ignominious and horrible forms.

The Greek emperors and bishops united in the persecution of those of them who uttered their testimony in the east. They commenced the work of false accusation, imprisonment, confiscation, and slaughter, almost immediately after their existence became known ; and continued it in Armenia through one hundred and fifty years, during which, vast numbers were decapitated, crucified, consigned to the flames, and plunged into rivers ; and their villages and dwellings burned, their property seized, and the lives of the survivors harassed with every species of oppression and outrage.

Those of them who were transported from their native land and colonized in Thrace and Bulgaria, continued to suffer persecution from the Greek emperors through several ages, and subsequently, as they migrated into the western empire, from the princes of Germany, Italy, and France, down to the sixteenth century.

In like manner the rulers and prelates of the west united in the persecution of those within their dominions. It was by the instigation of the pope and the subordinate prelates, that the princes of France, Savoy, Germany, and Italy, were led to make war on them. They commenced it against Claude of Turin,

renewed it against the Paulicians immediately on their entrance into Germany, Italy, and Gaul, and continued it through five hundred years against the Albigenses, Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Bohemians, during which great multitudes were swept to the grave by the sword and the fagot. The war of violence and outrage was commenced against the Protestants also within a few years after the proclamation of the gospel by them, and continued on a vast scale for two centuries in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and the British isles, never wholly ceased except during a short period after the commencement of the French revolution, and has within a few years been renewed in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, and Spain. Not one of the classes through that long period, who fulfilled the office of witnesses for God, escaped the vengeance of those antichristian powers.

Great numbers of these witnesses have relied solely on their testimony for defence against their enemies, contenting themselves with the profession of their faith, and vindication of the rights of God, and the proclamation of his threatenings of vengeance on antichrist; and then, without resorting to arms for the protection of their persons or maintenance of their liberties, calmly submitting to obloquy, torture, and martyrdom, for the sake of Christ.

This was as generally and conspicuously characteristic of those of them who were seized by their enemies, torn on the rack, and consigned to the flames, as was their profession of the truths of the gospel, and denunciation of the errors and idolatries of their persecutors. It was so eminent in the vast crowd of the Albigenses who were led to the stake, as to excite the wonder of their enemies, and raise the conviction that they were sustained by supernatural aids. Bernard, who had exerted himself to induce the magistrates to exterminate them with fire and sword, admitted that they met death with fortitude and cheerfulness, but had the folly and malice to ascribe it to diabolical influence.¹ Fortitude, meekness, and joy, were displayed in an equal degree by the martyrs at Orleans, Lombers, and other places in Gaul, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and the Waldenses in the thirteenth and fourteenth. Those who were butchered in Calabria are related to have died with a cheerfulness and constancy worthy of the disciples of Jesus. A Catholic

¹ *Mirantur aliqui, quod non modo patienter, sed et læti ut videbatur, ducerentur ad mortem; sed qui minus advertunt, quanta sit potestas diaboli, non modo in corpora hominum, sed etiam in corda quæ seinel permissus possederit.* Bernardi in *Cant. ser. 66, c. 13, tom. i. p. 1499.*

spectator represents the meekness and patience with which they went to martyrdom as astonishing. And an historian of the same communion who relates, in narrating the extermination of the colony, that some had their throats cut, some were sawn asunder, and others thrown from a high cliff, adds, that while the father saw his son put to death, and the son his father, they not only exhibited no symptom of grief, but said joyfully that they should become angels of God.¹ And such were the courage, cheerfulness, and trust in Christ, with which with scarce an exception, the vast crowd met the trials of torture and death, who were decapitated, strangled, or committed to the flames, in Italy and Spain, through a long series of years, till they were exterminated, and in France likewise, the Netherlands, Germany, and the British isles.

Such are the proofs, obscure and inadequate as their history is, that during the long apostasy of the visible church, God raised up teachers and communities, who have fulfilled in an eminent manner the office of witnesses for him, and presented a conspicuous fulfilment of the prophecy. Could we call up from their graves the crowds who slumber in the plains of Italy, the deep glens of the Alps, the ancient cities of Gaul, Britain, and Germany, the valleys of Spain, the glades of the Netherlands, who were represented by this symbol, and who sealed their testimony with their blood, how vast would be the army! How illustrious would they appear as witnesses for him could they repeat to us their assertion of his truth in opposition to their antichristian persecutors, and depict the trials they endured in allegiance to him! And could they reveal to us the tokens which he gave them of his approbation, the interpositions by which he upheld and often delivered them, and the great results both of mercy and of judgment which he made to spring from their agency, how majestic a verification would they form of the promise, that they should be what Moses and Elijah were both to him and to his enemies!

Grotius interprets the two witnesses of the two classes, Jews and Gentiles, of which the church at Jerusalem consisted after the building of *Ælia* by Hadrian. But that is against the analogy of the olive trees and lamps by which they are symbolized, and which sustain relations to each other like those of teachers and recipients of instruction, not like those of Jews and Gentiles, each of whom embraced both classes. It is in contradiction also to the use in the next verse of the term Gentiles, to represent idolaters. The witnesses are true teachers and worshippers, in

¹ McCrie's *Hist. Reform. in Italy*, pp. 306, 307.

contradistinction from whom Gentiles are apostates. To make one of them a Gentile therefore, is to represent him as an apostate instead of a witness.

Eichhorn regards Ananus and Jesus, two high priests who were slain by the Jewish Zealots, as the two witnesses; but they were rejectors of the gospel, not teachers and vindicators of its doctrines in opposition to apostates. He also regards the forty-two months and twelve hundred and sixty days, as used proverbially, or figuratively to denote a season of calamity, rather than a definite period of time. But that is against the law of symbolization. There is no analogy between a specific duration and calamity, or sorrow. Time is predicable of joy and prosperity, as well as of suffering and misfortune. There is no counterpart to a specific period of time, but a period that is determined by some resembling movement of the body by which it is measured. But the only movement of the earth that is analogous to its revolution on its axis, is its revolution round the sun; and in like manner its circuit round the sun is the only movement of the moon that is analogous to its revolution on its axis. The only periods therefore which the smaller revolutions, or the periods they occupy, can be employed to symbolize, are those of the larger revolutions, which are as specific as they themselves are.

Interpreters generally concur in regarding the witnesses as representatives of true teachers and worshippers, and the gentiles of apostates. They differ much, however, in their exposition of subordinate parts of the symbol.

Daubuz, following his usual method of determining the symbolic import of terms by what he regards as their metaphoric use, interprets the command to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers, as a command to take possession of the true worship and worshippers of God, and applies it to the Reformers of the sixteenth century. But there is no analogy between measuring an object and taking possession of it. It is measured to ascertain its quantity or proportion, and in order to determine its value, or adaptation to a specific use. It is taken possession of because of right, and in order to appropriation and enjoyment. It is moreover to make the command a solecism. As those whom the apostle symbolized are true worshippers, to command them to take possession of the true worship and worshippers, were to command them to take possession of themselves and their acts.

Mr. Elliott regards the rod as a symbol of the supreme magis-

trate, and interprets the measuring of the temple, the altar, and the worshippers of the adoption of the Protestant churches by civil rulers and institution as national establishments. But what analogy is there between measuring a temple already built, and the erection of another edifice? If the civil rulers were the rod by which the dimensions of the model were determined, who were the builders of the new structure? Not the prophet, nor those whom he symbolized. He was the representative of witnesses; not of kings and legislators; of teachers and recipients of the truth in distinction from apostates and usurpers of the rights of God, not of makers and executors of civil laws; and the representative of witnesses who fulfilled their office only by the utterance and vindication of truth, not by the authority of the civil magistrate. If any one wills to injure them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and if any one wills to injure them, so must he be killed, not by any other agency. It is thus expressly shown that they make use only of their testimony for God, the assertion and vindication of the great truths of his word, in defence of themselves against their enemies. To resort to the authority of the civil magistrate, or the sword, were to desert the office of a witness. No construction therefore could be more inconsistent with the symbol, or the character of the witnesses. It contradicts analogy, confounds the instrument with the agent, and assigns to the witnesses a protection from their enemies the direct reverse of that ascribed to them. Those civil rulers, moreover, in erecting the Protestant churches into national establishments, were guilty of a usurpation of the rights of God, and in that relation therefore in place of witnesses, were of the gentiles of the outer court who were to tread the holy city. For they proceeded in that act on the assumption that they had a right to dictate to their subjects their religious faith and worship. They claimed dominion over their relations to God, and presented their will as the reason that they should receive or reject truth, and offer or not offer a particular worship. But that is to usurp the place of God. The reason that he is to be worshipped is that he is God; not that civil rulers require that he should be worshipped. The reason that the Scriptures are to be made the rule of faith, is that they are a revelation from him; not that kings and legislators enjoin their reception as his word. And the reason that he is to be worshipped in this or that manner, is that he requires or authorizes it, not that it is appointed by human authority. They then who set aside those grounds of obligation and substitute their

will in their place, attempt the throne of the Almighty, arrogate his rights, and demand for themselves a homage that is due only to him. Their procedure implies that God has no absolute and underived right to reign; that his title to the homage of their subjects, and the authority of his laws, are created by their will; that he is their subordinate therefore, and that whatever he receives of awe and acknowledgment is their gift. In erecting the Protestant churches into national establishments therefore, instead of fulfilling the office of witnesses, they acted the part of the ten-horned wild beast, one of whose most peculiar characteristics is, the usurpation in that manner of the throne of God, and claim of dominion over the obligations and consciences of his subjects. And they accordingly who sanction that usurpation, are guilty, like the worshippers of the wild beast, of paying a homage to their rulers, which is due only to the Almighty.

Mr. Mede, Mr. Jurieu, and Mr. Whiston, regarded the temple and the outer court as representative of two periods of the church: the one pure, embracing the first centuries; the other following that, far longer, and corrupt. But it has no foundation in analogy. There are no such relations between an edifice and the area which surrounds it, as fits the one to symbolize the first ages of a church, and the other a subsequent and proportionally longer period. It is against the representation also that the witnesses who are the pure worshippers, are to be cotemporaneous with the Gentiles to whom the outer court is given, and to testify against their false doctrines, impious assumptions, and idolatrous worship while they tread the holy city.

Mr. Whiston also regarded the armed resistance of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and slaughter of their enemies, as a verification of the prophecy, that if any one wills to injure them, he must be put to death by fire proceeding from their mouth. But that is expressly against the prediction, which exhibits the instrument of their defence as proceeding from their mouth. Their words were to prove fire to their enemies, and devour them, because they were to be the threatenings contained in the Scriptures of the avenging judgments by which God has foreshown that he is to destroy them. Their office was simply to testify, not to fight, and to testify by proclaiming and vindicating the rights of God, in opposition to the usurpations, false doctrines, and superstitions of apostates. It is fulfilled accordingly only by professing and teaching, not by the sword, or any other instrument of violence. To defend themselves by force against the attacks of armies, and to slaughter enemies, was not to proclaim

the truth. Whether just or unjust, expedient or inexpedient, it cannot be considered as belonging to that agency, any more than any other acts wholly removed from the profession and vindication of truth. When the Albigenes and Waldenses therefore relinquished that profession, and assumed the sword, they ceased to act in the character of witnesses.

SECTION XXVI.

CHAPTER XI. 7-14.

THE SLAUGHTER AND RESURRECTION OF THE WITNESSES.

AND when they would finish their testimony, the wild beast which ascends out of the abyss, will make war on them, and will vanquish them, and will kill them; and place their dead body in the street of the great city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And of the peoples, and tribes, and tongues, and nations, they look on their dead body three days and a half; and they will not suffer their dead bodies to be placed in a sepulchre. And they who dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and exult, and will send gifts to one another; for these two prophets tried them who dwell on the earth. And after three days and a half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet. And great fear fell on those beholding them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, Ascend here. And they ascended to heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And in the same hour, there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and seven thousand men of name were killed by the earthquake; and the rest became fearful, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is passed: behold the third woe comes quickly.

The witnesses would finish their testimony before the close of the twelve hundred and sixty years, doubtless under the apprehension that it was no longer to be necessary; that the great changes wrought in public opinion and in the condition of the apostate church by judgments on it, divested it of its dangerous power and insured its speedy overthrow; and that they might therefore turn from the mere endeavor to maintain the truth in opposition to it, to the happier task of proclaiming it to those who had never yet heard its glad tidings. And such was emi-

nently the persuasion of the Protestants generally on the subversion of the French hierarchy and the conquest of the papal states towards the close of the last century, and at the grant of toleration to their subjects by the great European powers at the fall of the French empire. That the Catholic priesthood could recover in such a degree as it already has from its depression, resume a powerful influence over most of the cabinets, and renew a persecution of the witnesses, was neither anticipated nor regarded as possible. So far from looking forward to such a change, the Protestants of the period of the effusion of the first vials, commenced their great efforts for the conversion of the world, and continue generally to the present hour to cherish the most confident expectations of success.

The wild beast that ascends out of the abyss, is the symbol of the usurping and persecuting civil rulers of the Gentile nations that tread the holy city during the forty-two months, as will be shown in the exposition of the following chapters, in which its characteristics are more fully exhibited. Its persecuting career is not to terminate till the close of the forty-two months. Its judgment, however, has already begun in the effusion of the first vials, and it is in the exasperation and despair to which the tempestuous vengeance of succeeding judgments is to drive it, that it is to turn and endeavor to purchase support, or disarm opposition by the slaughter of the witnesses.

Their slaughter is obviously from many considerations to be literal. While the law of symbolization requires that representative agents should be of a dignity and significance proportioned to those whom they represent, yet often of necessity, from the want of adequate representatives, they are inferior. This is eminently true of several of the terrific symbols. The seven-headed dragon, and the seven-headed wild beast, mighty and terrible as they are, are greatly inferior to the vast combination of malignant and destructive agents whom they represent. But were the death of the witnesses any thing less than a literal and violent death;—were it a mere compulsion to silence, or interception from the public offering of a pure worship, which is the only other import that can be assigned to it, the symbol would be far more significant than that which it denotes. Nor is a violent death a proper symbol of a compulsion to silence. The states are wholly dissimilar. The one is a deprivation not only of all power of acting through the body, but of life itself. The other a mere deprivation or suspension of the power of exerting the faculties in speech, while life itself, activity and freedom of

thought, and the power of manifesting it to others in many modes, remain unimpaired. An obstruction therefore of the organs of speech, or the power of utterance, were a proper symbol of a compulsory silence, not death, which is a termination of all activity and sense, a release of the spirit from the dominion of men, and transference to another scene of existence.

Nor is it any objection that in this exposition death is interpreted as literal, and not analogical; since if the death of the witnesses is to be literal, it is not in violation of analogy, but to avoid its violation, that it is represented by a literal death. There is no condition of life, there is no variation of existence here, that is adapted to symbolize that change. To have employed any other change or condition to symbolize it, would have been to misrepresent it by the suggestion or assumption of resemblances that do not exist. To avoid a false symbolization therefore, it was, as in other instances of similar agents, indispensable that it should be made the representative of itself.

The city, is the great city Babylon, the associated teachers and rulers of the nationalized churches, which in expression of its character as paying to creatures and images a homage that is due only to God, is called Sodom and Egypt, apostate, intolerant of his people, and idolatrous.

The place where Christ was crucified, was an open elevated space without the walls of Jerusalem, and on one of the principal entrances to the city. The street where the dead body of the witnesses is to be placed, represents parts therefore of the ten kingdoms, bearing a relation of conspicuity and importance to the apostate hierarchies, like that which the great entrance to Jerusalem that passed along by the foot of Calvary bore to that city;—parts of those kingdoms from which those hierarchies largely derive their sustenance, wealth, and worshippers.

The people and nations who gaze on their bodies, are the subjects of the wild beast who approve of their slaughter. The trial to which the witnesses put those who dwell on the earth, is the trial of their principles and conduct by the word of God, the refutation of their false doctrines, the rebuke of their idolatries, and forewarning of the judgments by which they are to be overwhelmed. The refusal to allow their burial, implies that there are to be persons who will desire to perform for them that office, and yields additional proof that their death is to be literal. It is not easy to conceive what disposition that would be of witnesses merely compelled to be silent, which should be to them, what

burial is to a dead body. Would it be banishment to a distant scene? But what were that but to restore them to freedom and activity?

The exultation over them, and mutual congratulations of those who dwell on the earth, imply that they are to deem them and their adherents as forever silenced, and regard themselves as freed from the annoyances of a refutation of their principles, and a denunciation of their usurpations with which the witnesses had before tried them.

In this slaughter all the witnesses are to fall. As the two symbol witnesses represent all who are to fulfil their office, and as the symbol war was made on both of them, and they were both slain, their death must be regarded as symbolizing the death of all whom they represent. They are accordingly spoken of throughout as a class. There is no indication that any are to escape. They are all exhibited as dead, and denied a burial; and all as raised, and called to the cloud in heaven; and the exultation of their enemies at their slaughter and exposure to the public gaze, indicates that they are to be regarded as totally destroyed; and as they are the same as the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed of all the tribes of Israel, it indicates that the persecution is to extend to all the denominations of the church that contain true believers, and to be common therefore to all the ten kingdoms. It implies also that the persecuting powers are to act in concert, and agree beforehand in respect to the time of the slaughter, and the preservation and exposure of the dead bodies. What a tremendous crisis that is to be, when all evangelical teachers and confessors who faithfully maintain allegiance to God and refuse submission to the usurping powers of the state, are thus to be exterminated, and not an individual left openly to resist the wild beast and false prophet, and vindicate the rights of God! What an exasperation of those antichristian powers it bespeaks! What a determination to test the truth of this prophecy! And what an impious defiance of the Almighty! Their aim in the preservation and exposure of the bodies of the witnesses, is doubtless to be, like that of the Jewish priests in setting a watch at the sepulchre of Christ, to guard against a false pretence of their resurrection. They may think by placing them where the multitude may daily gaze at them, to render the expectation of their resurrection ridiculous; and to make the spectacle the more effective, may prevent them from dissolution by the methods discovered by modern chemists by which they may be preserved, not only so unaltered as to be identified, but as to

exhibit the peculiar expression and glow of the recently slain.¹ These measures most clearly indicate that this prophecy is to be understood at the period, and the expectation entertained and expressed by the witnesses, of a speedy resurrection.

The three days and a half, the period of the exposure of their bodies, and exultation of their enemies, like the twelve hundred and sixty days, are to be interpreted symbolically, as three and a half years.

Their resurrection is an additional proof that their death is to be literal. It is not to be the result of any efforts by themselves. That were to contradict the symbol. It is not to spring from any agency of their friends who would have buried them, nor from a political revolution. That were to contradict the symbol also. The political revolution, moreover, denoted by the earthquake, is to follow their resurrection, not to precede it. It is not to be a mere restoration to the liberty of speech. That would leave the symbol far more significant than that which it represents. Analogy also requires that like their death, it should be interpreted literally. A restoration from involuntary silence to freedom of speech, has no similitude to a restoration from decay to vitality, from insensibility to consciousness and activity. The one is a mere removal of restraint from powers already possessed, the other a gift of new powers themselves; the one a mere change of condition, the other a creation. Their only common characteristic is a change, but that, as the change of the one is wholly unlike

¹ He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
 Ere the first day of death is fled,
 The first dark day of nothingness,
 The last of danger and distress,
 Before decay's effacing fingers
 Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,
 And mark'd the mild, angelic air,
 The rapture of repose that's there,
 The fix'd yet tender traits that streak,
 The languor of the pallid cheek,
 And,—but for that sad shrouded eye,
 That fires not, wins not, weeps not now,
 And but for that chill, changeless brow,
 Where cold obstruction's apathy
 Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
 As if to him it could impart
 The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon—
 Yes, but for these, and these alone,
 Some moments, aye, one treacherous hour,
 He still might doubt the tyrant's power,
 So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
 The first, last look by death revealed.

that of the other, constitutes no resemblance, and presents no medium by which the one can be made the representative of the other. But instead of springing from natural causes, their resurrection is to be miraculous. A spirit of life from God is to enter into them, and they are to stand on their feet, and overwhelm those with fear who witness the spectacle.

The representation that they heard a great voice from heaven saying, Ascend here, implies either that it is to be heard by them alone, or to be so expressed as obviously to be addressed exclusively to them. If it is to be audible to the spectators and so expressed as to present no indication that it is exclusively directed to the witnesses, their enemies can only learn by a process of reason, or the event, that it is not also addressed to them.

The cloud in which they are to ascend, is the cloud of the divine presence doubtless, from which the voice summoning them to heaven is to proceed. Their assumption to heaven is to be a wholly different event from their resurrection; is like that to be, not the result of their exertion or contrivance, nor the work of their friends, but of the Spirit of God; and is to be visible to their enemies and public. They are to ascend in the cloud, the chariot of the Almighty in which Elijah was rapt to heaven, and become thereby invisible to men. It is to be literal, therefore. There is no change of station here that answers to these symbols. As a visible descent from the atmosphere, as of an angel, denotes a sudden and conspicuous entrance on an important agency here, so a visible and public ascent to heaven, in a cloud, can denote nothing less than a visible and public departure from this scene to the invisible world. Nor is it a deviation from the requirements of analogy that the symbol is in this instance of the same species as that which it is employed to symbolize, inasmuch as no change of which men are here the subjects, is in any degree suited to represent so peculiar and august an event.

Their resurrection and assumption, therefore, are to be a public and stupendous testimony of God to their truth and fidelity, and refutation of the usurpations and calumnies of their persecutors; and are to be felt to be such; for as an instant consequence, there is to be a great earthquake, by which a tenth of the city is to be thrown down and seven thousand men of name killed. A great earthquake denotes a sudden and violent revolution of the opinions and feelings of a people in respect to their government, in which their rulers are dejected from their stations, and their ancient institutions overthrown; as a violent agitation of the ground changes the attitude of every thing on its surface, overturns the

structures of art, and spreads the scene with confusion and ruin. The tenth of the city, is the tenth of the hierarchies denoted by the great city. It is the hierarchy, therefore, of one of the ten kingdoms, and a nationalized hierarchy, obviously, as its fall is to be the consequence of a political revolution, and the revolution of a persecuting government that is symbolized by the wild beast. The fall of a hierarchy, as will be shown in the comment on the fourteenth chapter, is its fall from its station as a national establishment. The slaughter, by the earthquake, of seven thousand men of name, is the slaughter doubtless of all the men of chief station in that civil government. The resurrection and assumption of the witnesses then, is to strike the spectators with an irresistible conviction that they are true worshippers of God; that the civil rulers, therefore, who persecuted and slew them are his enemies, and guilty of an impious invasion of his rights in assuming authority over his laws and the faith and worship of their subjects. Under the impulse of that conviction, they are no longer to submit to such an usurped dominion over their duties and their consciences, but are to hurl from their stations those who had arrogated it, and strike from existence their obnoxious institutions and laws. And this change of convictions and feelings is to extend equally to the national hierarchy, the creature of that government, which sanctions its usurpation of the rights of God and slaughter of his witnesses. The falsehood of its pretences to exclusive authority is to become irresistibly manifest. Its principles, its spirit, and its agency, like those of its parent and associate, the wild beast, are to be seen to be those of antichrist, and it is instantly to sink in the judgment and feeling of all to the rank of an apostate; its dignitaries are to be slaughtered along with the tyrannical civil rulers; and so overwhelming are to be these demonstrations, and the terror they are to inspire, that their associates and followers who survive are to be overawed, and give glory to God by the confession of their errors, the justification of the witnesses, the acknowledgment of the exclusive right of the Almighty to appoint the faith and homage of his creatures, and the vindication of his ways in delivering his servants and overthrowing his enemies.

What an august verification will these events form of the promise to the witnesses that their words shall prove a devouring fire to their enemies; that God will grant them as conspicuous tokens of his approbation as he gave his ancient prophets, and make them to his foes, what Moses was to the Egyptians, and Elijah to the apostate Israelites!

When these events shall have taken place, the second woe will have passed, and the period approached of the third.

The expositions which interpreters have given of this passage are very various. Most regard it as long since fulfilled, and in events that have very little correspondence with the symbol. The attempts of Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Eichhorn, and Rosenmuller, to find its counterpart in the events of the Jewish war under Vespasian or Hadrian, are marked, like their construction of preceding symbols, with a violation not only of all likelihood, but of possibility. Most of the events which they allege as fulfilments, were not only many centuries earlier than the second woe, and preceded the revelation itself a considerable period, but are wholly against analogy. According to Eichhorn, the witnesses were antichristian high priests, not believers, and the earthquake a slaughter, not a political revolution; agents and events which those symbols have no adaptation to represent.

Mr. Brightman's theory that the Scriptures are the witnesses, and the decree of the council of Trent declaring the Vulgate translation authoritative in preference to the Greek and Hebrew originals, their slaughter, is also against analogy, as living beings are symbols of intelligent agents only, never of inanimate objects.

Mr. Daubuz expounds the finishing of their testimony by the witnesses, as merely their testifying, and regards it as denoting as much the commencement of their testimony as its completion. Mr. Mede, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Elliott, and others, also interpret it as expressing only an approach towards the completion of their prophecy, not its absolute termination. It is the peculiar office, however, of the verb, to finish, to distinguish the completion of an act from its progress or commencement; as it is the office of the verb, to begin, to express its commencement, in distinction from its progress, or completion. It is applied, accordingly, like that verb, to periods of time, as well as to physical motions and voluntary agencies; and it is as flagrant a violation of its meaning to represent an action or period as finished before it has reached its end, as it is to exhibit a period or agency as commenced before it has begun. It is indeed applied to the several parts of complex actions as they are successively completed, but only in the sense of termination, not of progress. An architect is said to have finished the foundations of a building, its walls, its entrances, its ornaments, but only as they are severally completed. He is not said to have finished the structure, till all its parts are absolutely completed. All those applications of the symbol-

therefore, which assume that the witnesses were slain, before their testimony was completed, are in contradiction to the most unequivocal representations of the passage.

Those writers also interpret the death of the witnesses as merely a compulsory silence, on the ground that it is a symbol. It is not however a departure from the law of symbolization that death is in this instance used as a representative of itself, inasmuch as there is no condition of life that can properly symbolize it. What reason can be given that the souls of the martyrs of the fifth seal symbolize themselves, except that other beings are inadequate to represent them, and would, if employed, lead to misapprehension? But finally, as death when exhibited as an agent and a destroyer, as under the fourth seal, symbolizes destroyers of spiritual life, so, if used as a symbol of something besides itself, when exhibited as an effect, it must undoubtedly by the same law of analogy represent a spiritual death, not a constrained silence, to which it sustains no resemblance. To assume therefore that it is here used, like an ordinary symbol, as the representative of an event of some different but resembling species, involves the assumption that the death of the witnesses is a spiritual death, which is to contradict the whole representation of the passage.

Mr. Stuart, assuming that symbols have no meaning but such as is evolved by the laws of philology, maintains that the twelve hundred and sixty days are to be taken as denoting twelve hundred and sixty literal days, not as representatives of twelve hundred and sixty larger periods; and alleges as proof of it, that designations of time are used in the Scriptures in unsymbolic prophecies and simple historical narratives, to denote the periods which they literally express. But that is to assume that symbols have no representative significance, and is to take therefore from the things written in the book their whole prophetic meaning. If symbols are not employed as representatives, what is their office? Why are they used? Why are two of those of the first vision expounded by the Son of God himself as representatives of agents of a different species; a star of the messenger of a church; a candlestick of a church itself? Why did the interpreting angel assign a representative meaning to the symbols of the seventeenth chapter? And finally, if able to verify his assumption, why did not Mr. Stuart, as his rule of interpretation required, show that agents, like the seven-headed dragon, the ten-horned wild beast, and the locusts and horsemen, appeared in the scenes in Judea to which he refers those

symbols, and acted there the parts ascribed to them in the prophecy?

The assumption that to finish a testimony of twelve hundred and sixty days is simply to testify during those days as they successively pass, led Mr. Daubuz to regard the three and a half days that are to intervene between the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses, as denoting the same period as the twelve hundred and sixty days. But that is to exhibit them as dead through the whole period, and represent them therefore as wholly precluded from uttering a testimony. It is, moreover, to treat the most important terms of the prophecy as without any demonstrable meaning, and exhibit all attempts at its solution as hopeless and absurd. What better reason can be given for extending three days and a half to twelve hundred and sixty, than for reducing twelve hundred and sixty to three and a half?

But the events which commentators have alleged as the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses, have as little coincidence with the conditions of the symbol, as those expositions of its subordinate parts have with the laws of interpretation. They are represented as having been accomplished in the persecution of the Waldenses in the thirteenth century, and of the Bohemians in the fifteenth; in the defeat and depression of the German Protestants in their war with Charles V.; in the dispersion and return of the Vaudois in the seventeenth century; and in the persecution of the French Protestants at the revocation of the edict of Nantes. But none of those events have any of the requisite correspondences with the symbols. They were all anterior to the close of the twelve hundred and sixty days. If the death be interpreted of the literal slaughter of the people of God, whether as martyrs or soldiers, then they are obviously misapplications, inasmuch as there was no literal resurrection of the slaughtered, and assumption to heaven; as there must be if the death be literal. If the death which the symbol denotes be not literal, but symbolic, then those alleged fulfilments are as obviously misapplications, inasmuch as it is a spiritual death that is the counterpart of a literal, not a constrained silence, as they allege, which bears to it no analogy whatever.

The Waldenses, the Bohemians, the German Protestants, the French Protestants, and the Vaudois, attempted to defend themselves with the sword, and were slain chiefly as soldiers, not as martyrs. It was eminently so with the German Protestants. But it is exhibited as the characteristic of the witnesses that they defend themselves only by that which proceeds out of their

mouth—their testimony for God. Those therefore who fell of those nations on the battle-field, fell not in the relation of witnesses, but as soldiers simply and subjects of civil rulers.

They who fought against the emperor were not universally dissentients from the apostate church. Maurice himself, the chief author of their final victory, though professedly a Protestant, was obviously prompted supremely, as was Albert of Brandenburg and many others, doubtless, by political motives; while the soldiers on the side of the Protestants were drawn like other armies promiscuously from the subjects of the princes who united in that war, without consideration whether they were Protestants or Catholics. They cannot in any sense, therefore, be regarded universally as witnesses for God.

There was nothing in either of those alleged accomplishments of the prophecy that answers to a refusal of burial to the slain, to their assumption to heaven, to a great earthquake consequent on that assumption, nor to the fall of a tenth of the city. The secession of England from the dominion of the pope, which is exhibited by Mr. Cuninghame and Mr. Elliott as the fall of the city, has none of the requisite characteristics. It was not consequent on the recovery by the German Protestants of the religious liberty lost in the war with the emperor, but preceded it in its first act near twenty years.¹ It was not consequent on a revolution of the civil government. No such revolution took place. It was not a fall of the English hierarchy from its station as nationalized. That hierarchy did not by that secession cease to be established, nor did it incur by it the reputation of an apostate with the Protestants of the other nations.

Nor had the English revolution of 1688, which Mr. Faber regards as denoted by the earthquake and fall of a tenth of the city, any of the requisite characteristics. That revolution took place anterior to the reconquest of their valleys, and recovery of their ancient privileges by the Vallenses, not subsequently. The earthquake and fall of the city are represented as caused by the assumption of the witnesses. But no connection whatever subsisted between the reconquest of their country by the Vallenses and the English revolution. The church was not thrown from its station as nationalized by that revolution, but instead became

¹ Henry VIII. was declared head of the English church in 1531; the payment of annates prohibited in 1532; and appeals to Rome in 1533. The final renunciation of the pope's authority took place March 20th, 1534. Burnet's *Hist. Reformation*, book ii. The Protestants of Germany were defeated, and the Elector of Saxony taken prisoner April 24th, 1547. Sleidani *Hist. lib. xix. f. 307.*

more intimately connected with the government, and more firmly established as a civil institution.

Finally, neither of those events was followed speedily by the termination of the empire of the Turks over the regions conquered by them from the idolatrous Christians, nor by the seventh trumpet. Six hundred years have passed since the crusade against the Waldenses; four hundred and more since the martyrdom of Huss and Jerome and the war on the Bohemians. Three hundred years and more have passed since the secession of England; nearly three hundred since the defeat of the Protestant armies, and a hundred and fifty since the accession of William and Mary. Yet the Turks still maintain their empire, and are still a woe. The supposition that they ceased to be such when they reached the limit of their conquests, and began to decline, is wholly unauthorized. It implies that they are a woe to those nations only whom they threaten, but do not conquer; not to those whom they vanquish and rule with an iron rod from age to age. Though after the close of the seventeenth century they were less the objects of fear to the European states, they yet continued and still continue no less a scourge to the vast body of nominal Christians under their dominion in Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Armenia, Egypt, and the isles of the Mediterranean. And their empire is likely still to subsist. It has indeed greatly declined, yet scarcely more than Spain, which was at that period the most powerful of the ten kingdoms, and which, however sunk to decay, is doubtless to survive to the seventh trumpet. Of the long space from the Reformation, the first hundred and fifty years were marked by as frequent, as vast, and as cruel persecutions of the people of God, as any former period for many ages. The proportion of true witnesses to the apostate church, was far greater than at any former period, and the soil of every kingdom in Europe dyed with their blood. It is to disregard all the characteristics of the prophecy, therefore, to exhibit those remote and wholly dissimilar events as its fulfilment.

It is to contradict the representation of the tenth chapter also, that the servants of God should, after the Reformation, be again called to witness for him before peoples and nations, and tongues, and many kings. As their testimony during the twelve hundred and sixty days is to be finished before their slaughter, if their slaughter took place at the Reformation, their testimony must have been finished before or at the commencement of that event, and could not therefore be renewed at a subsequent period. Indeed what treatment of the sacred word can be more

unjustifiable than thus, in order to meet the exigences of a theory, not only without the slightest ground, but against the most certain and essential laws of language, to exhibit it as representing the witnesses as at the same time finishing their testimony, and not finishing it; being slaughtered, and not being slaughtered; being refused, and not refused a burial; being raised from death, and not raised; and assumed and not assumed to heaven in a cloud? Were it not equally legitimate to represent the wild beast at the same period, as making war and not making it; the city as fallen, and not fallen; the seven thousand men of name as killed, and not killed; and the remnant as giving, and not giving glory to God? If the same terms in the same passage may thus denote precisely opposite events, what proof can exist that opposite and contradictory meanings are not couched in all other passages?—that the seventh trumpet may not at the same period sound, and not sound; the dead rise, and not rise; the wild beast and false prophet be cast, and not cast into a lake of fire? Such a rule of construction must obviously be relinquished, or the interpretation of the prophecy abandoned as wholly impracticable.

On the other hand, these erroneous interpretations verify the representation of the tenth chapter, that the Reformation was to be misconstrued as the final victory of the people of God over their enemies, and the fall of the apostate church and destruction of the wild beast. Such a false estimate of the events of that period, is more surprising now, than when they were passing. The lapse of three hundred years has revealed the great imperfections of that work, and shown the fallacy of the expectation then entertained of its spread and triumph through all the kingdoms of Europe. A large share of the nations that first united in it, soon returned to the Catholic church. No accessions have been made to the territory of Protestantism in Europe during the last three centuries; while, on the other hand, the decline of the churches that still survive on the continent, especially in faith and piety, is portentous in the extreme. Sunk during the last seventy years into open and profligate infidelity, with but here and there an exception, they are now as conspicuously apostate as the idolatrous church from which they seceded, and stand in as urgent need of a total reformation of principle and manners. Is it credible that this return to apostasy is the act of the witnesses who ascended into heaven in a cloud?

SECTION XXVII.

CHAPTER XI. 15-19.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

AND the seventh angel sounded. And there were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdom of the world is become our Lord's and his Messiah's, and he shall reign forever and ever. And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones, fell on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We thank thee, O Lord, the Almighty God, who is, and who was, that thou hast assumed thy great power, and reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead to judge, and give the reward to thy servants the prophets, and the holy, and those who fear thy name, small and great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of his covenant was seen in his temple. And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.

The great voices from heaven are undoubtedly from the angelic hosts. They announce that their Lord and his Messiah has entered on the empire of the world as its king, and shall reign forever and ever. It is to be a new era, therefore, in the government of the earth; the commencement by Christ of a widely-different and an eternal administration over it as its king. The great acts that are to mark its introduction are celebrated by the elders. They give thanks to the Self-existent, the Eternal, and the Almighty; first, that he has exercised his supreme right, and reigned as a sovereign through the long period from the creation, during which the nations had manifested their hostility; and next, that the time is come in which he is to display his displeasure at their rebellion, to judge and give reward to his servants, and to destroy those who destroy the earth. Their thanks that he has taken his great power and reigned, are undoubtedly thanks that he has exercised such an administration as he has through the preceding ages of the world, during which the nations showed their aversion to his dominion; and imply a sense therefore of its rightfulness and its wisdom as a preparative for the everlasting rule of grace that is to follow. Their thanks that his wrath is come, and the time to destroy the destroyers of the earth, are thanks that the apostate and idolatrous powers that have usurped the dominion of the earth, and warred against his

worshippers, are now to be overthrown, and expelled from the scene; and their thanks that the time of the dead is come, to judge, and give reward to his servants, the prophets, and to the holy, and to those who fear his name, small and great, are thanks that the holy dead, whether prophets or others, are now to be raised from the grave, freed in full from the penalty of sin, and publicly adopted as heirs of his kingdom; and that the living who fear his name, small as well as great, are to be placed under a new administration, and receive the gift of transfiguration promised to those who are living at his advent. The opening of the inner temple, and exhibition of the ark of the covenant, denote probably that the mysteries of his former administration are finished; that thenceforth the reasons of his procedure are to be understood, and especially that he is to reign visibly to his people on earth, whom the prophet represented, complete the redemption of his sanctified, and exalt them to more intimate relations to himself.

The lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquake, and hail, that followed, were on the earth, and denote excitements, commotions, and revolutions among the nations, and the descent on them of destroying judgments.

The seventh trumpet is to be followed then by three most momentous events; the assumption by the Redeemer of the dominion of the earth in a new and peculiar relation as its king, and commencement of a visible and eternal reign; the resurrection from their graves of all those of his saints who have suffered the penalty of death, and public adoption as the heirs of his kingdom, and the acceptance of all the living who fear him, and reward by the peculiar blessings which are to distinguish his reign on the earth; and finally, the destruction of the apostate powers, the wild beast, false prophet, and their supporters, who have so long arrogated his right of dominion and usurped his empire. That trumpet is to be cotemporaneous therefore doubtless with the seventh vial, which is to be followed also by lightnings, and voices, and thunders, a great earthquake, and much hail; and with the closing events also symbolized under the sixth seal.

The assumption of the dominion of the earth by the Redeemer, which is then to take place, is that which was beheld by Daniel in night visions, when one like a son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him before him, and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion

which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.¹ What space these great actions and catastrophes are to occupy, is not indicated. Probably from their nature and the representations in subsequent visions, a considerable period.

Grotius and Dr. Hammond interpret the symbols of this trumpet of the toleration and prosperity of Christians in Judea, after the suppression of the Jewish insurrections by Hadrian; Eichhorn, of the triumph of Christianity over Judaism at the subversion of Jerusalem by Titus; Mr. Brightman, of the prosperity of the Protestant church in the latter half of the sixteenth century; but those periods present no resemblances whatever to the prophecy. There was then no commencement of a new and triumphant reign of the Redeemer over the earth; there was no destruction of the antichristian powers that had usurped his right of dominion and persecuted his people; there was no universal agitation among the nations, and overthrow of their governments; there was no public reward of the holy dead of all preceding generations by a resurrection in glory, and adoption as heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. That they are to be raised at the seventh trumpet, is shown by the representation that God is then to vindicate them, and give them their reward. Their vindication will involve their public forgiveness through the merits of Christ, their release from all the penalties of sin, and adoption as his sons. It will involve therefore a resurrection from death, which is the most conspicuous penalty of sin, and the only one that will retain dominion over them till that period. Their resurrection, indeed, is to constitute their adoption as sons of God, Rom. viii. 23. That restoration of their bodies from the dishonors of death and exaltation to immortality and glory, is to form a conspicuous and majestic demonstration to the universe of their full forgiveness and acceptance as children, as Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead. They are to be rewarded also by elevation to the station of kings and priests in his presence, and a share in the glories and beatitude of his everlasting reign. That those great events are to take place at the seventh trumpet is shown, moreover, expressly in Matthew xxiv. 31, 1 Corinthians xv. 52, and 1 Thessalonians iv. 16.

Some commentators have regarded the judgment of the dead which is to follow the seventh trumpet, as a judgment of the evil as well as the good. There is no reference however in the passage to any except the servants of God, and it is expressly rep-

¹ Daniel, chap. vii.

resented in chapter xx. 4-6, and in 1 Thessal. iv. 16, that the dead in Christ are to rise first.

Mr. Whiston and Mr. Cuninghame regard the period of the seventh trumpet as embracing the seven vials, and chiefly on the ground that the temple of God is said to be opened before the effusion of the first vial, as well as at the sound of that trumpet. But the opening of the temple before the effusion of the vials, was in order that the apostle and the harpers on the glassy sea might witness the delivery of the vials to the angels, and their procedure from the divine presence.

It is also thought to be a proof that the vials are cotemporaneous with that trumpet, that they are denominated the last seven plagues. That they are the last seven plagues, however, is no proof that the first six do not precede the last trumpet.

But if, as Mr. Cuninghame deems, the first vials have already been poured, the error of his assumption is indisputable, inasmuch as the second woe has not yet reached its termination, nor have the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses taken place, which are to precede the seventh trumpet. No fact can be more certain and obvious than that the empire of the Turks still survives, maintains its dominion over the territories conquered from the idolatrous church, and continues to be an antichristian and persecuting power. On what ground can it be assumed that their sway over those vast territories ceased to be a woe, the moment they ceased to extend their conquests? Did it cease to be a tremendous token of the wrath of the Almighty at the idolatries of the ancient churches which it was appointed to rebuke and chastise? Did it cease to be an unspeakable calamity to the churches which survived in Greece, Asia Minor, Armenia, Syria, and Egypt, and which still survive, notwithstanding the debasing examples, the cruel oppressions, and the frequent slaughters of the last hundred and fifty years? Nor, independent of the continuance of that woe, can any truth be more indisputable, from the laws of symbolization, than that no such events have taken place as are denoted by the slaughter of the witnesses, the refusal to them of a burial, their resurrection and assumption to heaven, an earthquake and fall of a tenth of the great city consequent on that assumption, a slaughter of seven thousand men of name, and an acknowledgment by the survivors of the guilt of the persecutors, and the righteousness of God in the great acts by which he vindicates his servants and destroys their enemies. To admit that any of the events which are alleged as such, are the counterpart of those symbols, were to assume that the symbols are in the ut-

most degree self-contradictory, and without any determinable meaning, and involve the interpretation of the whole book in total uncertainty. We are required, therefore, by the most imperative necessity, to regard the seventh trumpet as still future, and probably at a considerable distance, and may, without any inconsistency with this or any other passage, assume that the first six vials precede it, and are already poured and pouring. The events of the French revolution and the wars that followed in its train, were indeed tremendous, and present a conspicuous counterpart to the symbols of the first five vials. Yet they were not destructive either of the wild beast or false prophet. So far from it, the usurpation by the governments, of dominion over the obligations and consciences of their subjects, the idolatry of the church, and the profligacy of the people, remain essentially as they were, while a restless and aspiring spirit is generated in the lower classes, which seems preparative to a universal revolution, whose horrors shall far transcend any that precede it, and—consummated by the interposition of the Son of God to complete the destruction of his foes—entitle it exclusively to the designation of the third woe.

SECTION XXVIII.

CHAPTER XII. 1-6.

THE WOMAN AND DRAGON.

AND a great sign was seen in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. And being with child, she cries, in the pangs of birth and in labor, to deliver.

And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads seven diadems. And its tail drew the third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear, that when she should bring forth, it might devour her child. And she brought forth a male child, who is to rule all nations with an iron sceptre. And her child was caught up to God and to his throne.

And the woman fled into the desert, where she has a place prepared by God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and sixty days.

The woman is the representative of the true people of God, obviously, from the persecution she endures from the dragon, and her flight into the desert, and subsistence there through the period during which the witnesses prophesy. Her sunbeam robe, her station above the moon, and her crown of stars, bespeak her greatness, conspicuousness, and majesty; as the effulgent countenance, the cloudy robe, and iris splendors of the angel of the Reformation, indicate the conspicuity, grandeur, and power of those whom he represents. Her cry and labor to bear, denote the importunate desire and endeavor of those whom she symbolizes, to present to the empire one who should as their son, rise to supreme power, and rule the nations with an iron sceptre, repressing the pagans from persecution, and giving the church toleration and peace.

The great red dragon symbolizes the rulers of the Roman empire; the seven heads denoting the seven species of the chiefs of its ancient government; the ten horns the chiefs of the kingdoms into which its western half was divided on its conquest by the Goths. It is the symbol of the Roman, not any earlier or later empire, obviously, both from its correspondence with that which was employed in the visions of Daniel, chapter vii. 20-24, to represent the rulers of the fourth great kingdom, which was indisputably the Roman, the conqueror and successor of the Macedonian; and from the fact that that is the only empire that accords in any degree with the symbol. It is the representative of the rulers of the Roman empire, not of the empire itself or its population, manifestly from the exhibition on the one hand, chap. xiii. 3, 4, of the whole earth, the symbol of that population in subjection to its rulers, as admiring and worshipping the wild beast, the dragon's successor; and of the dragon, on the other, as surrendering to that wild beast on the triumph of the Goths, its throne and dominion over the western half of its territory. A throne, great power and authority, are peculiarities of rulers, not of subjects. Its sweeping its tail through the sky, dragging one third of the stars, and casting them to the earth, represents its violent dejection of one third of the Christian teachers from their stations by imprisonment, condemnation to the mines, disqualification for their office by depriving them of their eyes, or martyrdom. Its station before the woman, and purpose as soon as she should bring forth, to devour her offspring, indicate their apprehension that the people of God were about to favor the elevation to the throne of a Christian prince, and design, should they patronize a candidate for the supreme rule, with the expectation that

he would restrain their pagan persecutors, and give them toleration, to destroy the object of their favor. Her bearing a male child who was about to rule the nations with an iron sceptre, denotes that they assumed that relation towards one who was a candidate for the imperial throne, and destined at length to ascend it, and become the first of a succession of princes who should repress their pagan persecutors with an iron sway. That her son was suddenly caught up to God and to his throne, denotes both that he was rescued in an extraordinary manner from the attempts of the pagan emperors to destroy him, and exalted to supreme power in the empire ; and that he became in that station a usurper of the rights of God, and an object of idolatrous homage to his subjects. That the woman fled into the desert, signifies that the people of God, wholly disappointed in their expectation of a more favorable rule from monarchs professing to be Christian, and exposed to greater evils than they had suffered from their pagan persecutors, were compelled, in order to safety, to retire from the nationalized church into seclusion. That she was to be nourished there twelve hundred and sixty days, denotes that they were to continue in seclusion, upheld by the special care of God, through a period of twelve hundred and sixty years. As the woman is the representative of a multitude, and succession of believers, so the man-child is the representative of a dynasty or succession of princes.

That the actors and agencies represented in this vision are not subsequent to the seventh trumpet, is obvious from the symbols. That trumpet is the signal of the overthrow of the Roman empire in its last form, the final deliverance of the people of God from their persecuting enemies, and from death itself, and establishment in an everlasting kingdom under Christ as their king. But this symbol exhibits the government of that empire in its power, and at a period many ages anterior to the deliverance of the people of God, as the flight of the woman into the desert, where she is to subsist through twelve hundred and sixty years, denotes ; and anterior also to the fall of the western empire and conversion into ten kingdoms, as the diadems on the dragon's heads, the badge of the imperial rule, indicate.

In what period, then, during the continuance of the imperial rule, shall we find all these conditions united ; a persecution during which great numbers of the teachers of the church were dejected from their stations ; a vehement desire of the people of God that some one should be raised up whom they might patronize, and aid in ascending the throne, in expectation that he would

reign as a friend and professor of Christianity, repress their persecutors, and give them freedom and security; an alarm of the chiefs of the empire at that wish, and determination to crush the candidate for supreme power, who should become the object of such an expectation; the rise of an heir to the throne towards whom the people of God assumed that relation, and whom the chiefs of the empire endeavored to destroy; his sudden and extraordinary extrication from their power, and elevation to a station beyond their reach; his usurpation of the divine rights, and becoming an object of idolatrous homage; his disappointment of the hope of the people of God of a rule favorable to their purity and peace; and their retreat in consequence into seclusion, and continuance in obscurity through a long succession of ages?

All these conditions meet most conspicuously in the period of Constantine and his successors.

I. The imperial rule still subsisted, and continued a hundred and seventy years after his accession to the throne. He was proclaimed Augustus by the western army on the death of his father, July 25th, 306;¹ the subversion of the western empire by the conquest of Augustulus, took place in 476.²

II. The diadem was introduced by Diocletian, as the imperial badge, continued to be worn till the fall of the western throne, and was adopted by the Gothic kings who succeeded to the western empire.³

III. The period of Constantine's accession was a period of persecution, during which great numbers of the Christian teachers were struck from their stations, as the stars were swept by the dragon from the sky, and consigned to prisons, to the mines, and to martyrdom, or disqualified by mutilation for the exercise of their office. It was commenced by Diocletian on the 23d of February, 303, and before the close of the year was by a new edict directed chiefly against those who presided in the churches. The prisons being soon filled with bishops, presbyters, deacons, and readers, another edict followed enjoining that such of them as could be induced to sacrifice to the gods should be set at liberty, but that such as refused, should be put to the severest torture.⁴ By a fourth edict in 305, all without distinction through-

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. xxiv. xxv. Pagi Crit. in Baron. an. 306, no. 6-10. Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. xiv.

² Pagi Crit. in Baron. an. 476, no. 2, 3. Gibbon's Hist., chap. xxxvi.

³ Gibbon's Hist. chap. xiii.

⁴ Quæ autem per totum orbem singuli gesserint, enarrare impossibile est. Quis

out the empire were required to offer sacrifice to idols, the magistrates were enjoined to contrive severer torments to constrain the reluctant, and the incorrigible were consigned without reserve to the wild beasts, the sword, or the flames.¹ The number who suffered under these edicts in Mauritania, Upper and Lower Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Thrace, and Italy, is represented as immense.²

IV. The people of God were led by the toleration granted by Constantius Chlorus to the Christians in his dominions, and the persuasion that his family were favorable to Christianity, to the desire and hope that his son Constantine might be elevated to the imperial rank, in the expectation that under his sway the pagan party would be prohibited from persecuting, and restrained from the extreme indecencies of their worship.

Constantius Chlorus who held the rank of Cæsar, and had command of Britain, Spain, and Gaul, at the promulgation of the first edict, and became Augustus on the abdication of Diocletian, yielded to the wishes of the persecuting emperors only so far as to demolish the houses of worship. No Christians were put to death, or imprisoned in France, or, so far as is known, in Britain. "The emperor Constantius Chlorus was distinguished through his whole life for mildness and clemency towards those under his rule, and friendliness to Christianity. He took no share in the war waged against the church, but protected the pious who lived under his jurisdiction from molestation, neither destroying their edifices for worship, nor intermeddling with them in any respect. And he alone, after a peaceful and glorious reign, left his empire at death to a legitimate, a modest, and a religious son. On his demise, Constantine, who had long before been assigned to that office by the Almighty, was immediately saluted Augustus by the army, and became a zealous emulator of his father's veneration for the Christian religion."³ The exemption of the churches of Gaul, Britain, and probably in a degree those of

enim voluminum numerus capiet tam infinita, tam varia genera crudelitatis? Accepta enim potestate, pro suis moribus quisque sævivit.—Lactantii Inst. lib. v. de Just. c. 11. Moshemii de Rebus ante Const. pp. 929-934.

¹ Eusebii de Mart. Palæst. c. iii. Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xv. xvi.

² Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 6. De Martyr. Palæst. p. 260, c. ii. p. 262. Moshemii de Rebus ante Const. pp. 928-947.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 13, 18. Lactantius represents Constantius Chlorus as yielding so far to the wishes of Diocletian and Galerius, as to order the demolition of the houses of worship. Nam Constantius ne dissentire à majorum præceptis videretur, conventicula, id est, parietes, qui restitui poterant, dirui passus est, verum autem Dei templum quod est in hominibus, incolumo servavit.—De Mort. Persecut. c. xv.

Spain also, from the violence with which they were wasted in all the other provinces, through nearly three years and a half, from the commencement of the persecution to the death of Constantius Chlorus, sufficiently demonstrated to the whole empire the tolerant disposition of his family, and naturally gave birth to a general wish that his sceptre might descend to his son; and the continuance of that tolerant policy by Constantine through the six years that followed, gave the most ample assurance of favor under his sway, and raised a universal and intense desire that he might be advanced to supreme power, and extend his protection to the whole church.¹ This confidence in him is indicated in the letter addressed to him in the year 313 by several of the Donatist bishops of Africa, desiring him to appoint bishops of the Gallic church to settle their difficulties. "Good emperor, as you are of a just family, of all the emperors your father alone having never persecuted, and as Gaul is now exempted from that outrage, we ask you in your piety to appoint bishops from that province who may judge between us and the other bishops of Africa, with whom we are at variance."²

V. This desire of his elevation is indicated by the prayers offered by the church. "The Lord has heard the prayers which were offered continually by you and the other brethren, who by a glorious confession sought an eternal crown. Behold the persecutor himself has joined in them;³ and tranquillity being restored through the empire, the church lately prostrate has again risen, and the temples of God which the emperor had overturned, are by his mercy re-erected in greater beauty than before. For he has raised up princes⁴ who have put an end to the cruel sway

¹ Eusebius relates that the inhabitants of the other parts of the empire on learning the character of his reign, at the west, pronounced those happy that lived under his rule, and prayed that they also might at length enjoy the same blessings.—*De Vita Const. lib. ii. c. 22.* Lactantius also represents the people and army universally as desiring his elevation.—*De Mort. Persecut. c. xix.*

² Rogamus te Constantine optime imperator, quoniam de genere justo es cujus pater inter cæteros imperatores persecutionem non exercuit et ab hoc facinore immunis est Gallia; nam in Africa inter nos et cæteros episcopos contentiones sunt, petimus ut de Gallia nobis iudices dari præcipiat pietas tua. Datæ à Luciano, Digno, et cæteris episcopis partis Donati.—*Optati de Schis. Donat. lib. i. p. 22.* Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 436.

In the acts of the council represented by Isidore to have been held at Rome soon after that of Nicæa, Constantine is denominated a son of the church. *Mater ecclesia genuerat filium Constantinum carissimum.*—*Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 619.*

³ Alluding to the edict of Galerius in 311, in which he prohibited the further persecution of the Christians, and solicited their prayers for his safety.—*Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. xxxiv.*

⁴ Constantine and Licinius, who in 313 united in an edict giving toleration to the church.

of the tyrants, and given protection to the people, so that already, as though the late clouds were dispersed, all are gladdened with peace and serenity. Those tempests have passed away, the air has become calm, and the light shines, without obstruction. God in his pity has relieved his afflicted servants, and wiped away the tears of the mourners."¹

Sozomen represents the church as praying, at the period of the conflict with Licinius, that Constantine might become sole monarch of the empire, and exerting its influence in his favor. "Licinius on account of his dissension with Constantine became extremely hostile to the Christians, expecting to grieve him by the misfortunes of his religion, and regarding the church as offering prayer, and strenuously endeavoring that he might exercise the imperial sway alone."² And Eusebius, in his celebration of the victory, represents the martyrs who fell during the persecution, as having anticipated the triumph of their champion, and desired to live to witness and share the happiness with which the church was filled on the restoration of peace.³

VI. The emperors were alarmed by these desires and designs of the Christians towards Constantine, and doubtless by favorable dispositions exhibited by him towards the church, and resolved and attempted to destroy him, but he was extricated from their plots, and exalted to imperial power.

"Galerius, after the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian Herculus, conducted himself as though he were sole emperor, for he disregarded Constantius both on account of his mild disposition and his ill health, and designed, if he did not soon die, which he hoped, to depose him."

"Constantius, on becoming dangerously ill, sent letters, as he had repeatedly before, desiring Galerius to release his son Constantine, who had been held by Diocletian and Maximian as a hostage, and allow him to return to him. But Galerius wished nothing less, for he had often attempted to destroy him by treachery, not venturing on any thing against him openly, for fear of provoking a civil war, or exciting the hatred of the soldiers. Under pretence of exercise and sport, he exposed him to wild beasts, but without gaining his end, as he was protected by that divine hand that afterwards freed him from the emperor's toils in the crisis of his danger. For having often, when he could no longer evade it, given him a seal towards the close of the day, and ordered that on receiving directions he should early on the

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. i.

² Sozomeni Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 7.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 1.

following morning set out, he either himself retained him on some pretence, or sent forward letters directing Severus to retain him. Constantine foreseeing that that would be repeated, immediately on the emperor's falling asleep after supper, hastened to depart, and using all the public horses through several days' journey, fled with the utmost haste. The next day the emperor, after designedly delaying to rise till noon, commanded that he should be called, and on being told that he had gone the previous evening, began to rage, and ordered post horses that he might cause him to be brought back, and hearing that he had taken them all, could scarcely refrain from tears. But Constantine, advancing with the utmost celerity, went to his father, who was near death, and who having recommended him to the army, transferred the government to his hands. And Galerius, though reluctant, was induced, from the fear of a civil war, to ratify his election, and send him the purple."¹

Eusebius also: "The emperors of the time were excited to envy and fear by the dignity of his person, his talents, and high spirit, and watched him with the desire to turn something to his discredit, which the young man perceiving, for their plots were several times detected, he saved himself by flight. Having thus escaped from their toils, he proceeded with haste to his father. Constantius, who was dangerously ill, on seeing his son, leaped from his couch, and embracing him, gave thanks to God that the only sorrow he felt as he was about to depart, was thus removed by the restoration of his son; and said he now regarded death as better for him than perpetual life; and having settled his affairs, constituted his eldest son the heir of his empire, and bid adieu to his children, he expired. But the government did not remain without an imperial head. Constantine assuming the purple proceeded from the palace, and exhibited his father as it were to the multitude living and reigning again in himself; and having celebrated his obsequies with great splendor, was saluted by all with shouts and acclamations as emperor and Augustus."²

A similar account is given by Philostorgius: "The death of Constantius took place in Britain, where Constantine, having in an extraordinary manner escaped the plots of Diocletian, found him ill; and after the celebration of his funeral, was constituted his successor to the empire."³ He was repeatedly plotted

¹ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. xxiv. xxv. Zosimi Hist. lib. ii. c. 8.

² Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. i. c. 20, 21, 22.

³ Philostorgii Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 5.

against also at a later period by Maximianus Herculius and Licinius.¹

VII. He became in that station a usurper of the rights of God, by assuming an absolute authority over the religion of his Christian subjects. In prescribing their faith and worship, he treated their religious obligations as under his jurisdiction, and thence the rights and legislation of the Most High as subordinate to his, and dependent on his for their efficiency. And he asserted that dominion over God and his people, in all the forms which such an arrogation of the divine rights could assume, acting as the king of the church, its lawgiver, and its judge.

He assembled synods, and dictated what topics they should discuss and adjudge. He ordered the synod of Rome in 313, to hear the accusers of Cæcilianus.² He summoned the council of Arles in 314, to rejudge the cause of the Donatists. The following is a part of a letter addressed by him on that occasion to the bishop of Syracuse. "We have ordered a great body of bishops from different and almost numberless places, to assemble at the city of Arles, by the first of August, and write to direct you to take a public vehicle, with two of the second order whom you may choose, and three youths, who may serve you on the way, and present yourself at the forementioned place on that day, that by your gravity, and the judgment of the others who are to assemble, this disgraceful contest which has so long continued, may be terminated in harmony."³ He summoned the councils of Nicæa also and Tyre.⁴

VIII. He treated their decrees as dependent for their authority on his ratification, and by his edicts made them laws of the empire. "The decrees which the bishops had enacted in the councils he ratified, so that it was not lawful for the prefects of the provinces to rescind their canons."⁵

IX. He endeavored to compel his subjects to acquiesce in his faith. Thus in the letter which he addressed to the churches after the synod of Nicæa. "As I have a proof in the prosperous condition of the empire of the greatness of God's goodness towards us, I have thought it becomes me to endeavor especially that one faith, sincere love, and a uniform worship of the omnipotent God, should be maintained by all the happy multitudes of the Catholic church. But as it could not be firmly and unalter-

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. viii. c. 13. Lib. x. c. 8. De Vita Const. lib. i. c. 50.

² Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 463.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 5, p. 320. Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 466.

⁴ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iii. c. 6. Lib. iv. c. 41.

⁵ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 27.

ably settled, except all or at least a great number of the bishops met, and made a decision in respect to each particular that concerns religion, as many as could have assembled, and I myself as one of you, being present,—for I would not deny that in which I chiefly rejoice, that I have become your fellow servant,—all things were discussed until a decision acceptable to the all-seeing God was unanimously adopted, so that no room is left for diversity or contention.”¹

He accordingly proceeded to enforce the creed of the synod on all his subjects, to prohibit all assemblies of dissentients from the Catholic church, confiscate their property, and suppress their books. “Having removed those dissensions and settled the church of God in harmony, turning then, he thought a different class of the impious ought to be broken up as enemies to the community; for certain persons were pests, laying waste the cities under a pretext of piety. The Saviour called them false prophets and ravening wolves, when he said prophetically, Beware of the false prophets who will come to you in the dress of sheep, but beneath they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Sending therefore an edict to the prefects of the provinces, he dispersed every such tribe; and, in addition to that law, enjoined the vivifying doctrine on them personally, exhorting men to an earnest reformation, inasmuch as the church of God would be to them a harbor of salvation. Hear, therefore, how he discoursed in the letters he addressed to them. ‘Know by this law, ye Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, Paulists, Cataphrygians, and all who form sects by private assemblies, your folly is involved in so many falsehoods, and your doctrine imbued with such poisonous drugs, that the healthy are led by you to disease, and the living to eternal death. O enemies of verity, adversaries of life, contrivers of destruction, every thing with you is the opposite of truth and consonant with a base depravity; suited to the absurdities and fictions with which you set off falsehood, but afflict the unoffending, and deny the light to those who believe. Under a pretext accordingly of piety, perpetually transgressing, you pollute every thing, wound pure consciences with deadly strokes, and almost intercept day itself from the eyes of men. But what necessity is there to relate particulars, so outrageous, so immeasurable, so detestable are your absurdities, that the whole day would not suffice to detail them. It is becoming rather to avoid hearing and to avert the eye from such things, lest by the narrative the pure faith should be defiled.

¹ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iii. c. 17.

Why then should we allow such evils any longer? The consequence indeed of a long endurance of them already is, that the healthy are infected as with a pestilent disease. Why therefore should we not, by a public animadversion, cut up the root of such an evil as quick as possible? Wherefore as the plague of your errors can no longer be borne, we make known by this law that no one of you may hereafter dare to convene a congregation; and accordingly command that all the edifices in which you hold such assemblies be taken away; it being our design not only not to allow your superstitious and senseless assemblies in public, but not even to permit them in private houses or in any separate places; but what is far better, that as many of you as are desirous of the true and pure religion, should come to the Catholic church, and partake of its sanctity, through which you may be able to attain the truth. Far from the felicity of our times be the error of your perverted understandings, I mean the impious and deadly opinions peculiar to the heretics and schismatics. For it becomes the happiness which we enjoy of God, that those who live with good hope should be led from error into the right way, from darkness to the light, from folly to the truth, from death to salvation. And that the magistrate may have the requisite power for this remedy, we have commanded, as has already been mentioned, that all the houses of your superstition, that is the oratories of all sects—if it be proper to call their houses oratories—be without contradiction taken away and immediately delivered to the Catholic church; but other places adjudged to the public, that no opportunity be hereafter left you of assembling. Accordingly, let not your forbidden congregations from this day venture to meet in any place whatever, whether public or private. Let this be published.'

"In this manner the secret assemblies of the heterodox were broken up by the imperial command, and the wild beasts who were the authors of this impiety, driven off. But of those who had been deceived by them, some, through fear of his sovereign threat, entered the church with unworthy views, dissembling for the time; and as the edict required that their books should be sought, and they who practised forbidden arts were detected, they for that reason complied with the law, consulting their safety by dissimulation. But others promptly turned, from a true conviction, to the hope of better things."¹

X. He claimed the right to punish those, who, in their doctrine or worship, declined submission to his will, as guilty of a

¹ Eusebii de Vita Constant. lib. iii. c. 63-66.

violation of his rights, and deposed them from office, confiscated their property, banished them to distant provinces, and threatened them with death. He deposed Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, and Theognis, bishop of Nicæa,¹ and, on their recantation, dismissed their successors, and reinstated them in their churches.² He threatened banishment to any bishop who should refuse to obey his summons to the synod of Tyre. "I have sent Dionysius a consul who will suggest who ought to attend the synod with you, and be present to oversee the transactions, and especially to maintain good order. Moreover, if any one should endeavor to elude our commands and decline to attend, which we do not expect, some one shall be sent by us who will drive him into exile, and give it to be seen that it is not becoming to oppose laws enacted by the emperor for the cause of truth."³ He banished Arius, ordered that all books written by him and his partisans should be burned, and threatened death to any who should be convicted of endeavoring to conceal them.⁴

XI. He deposed and appointed bishops at his pleasure. "Eusebius and Theognis he ordered into exile from the cities of which they were bishops, and wrote to the church of Nicomedia to hold the faith the synod had imposed, and to choose orthodox bishops and obey them, but to consign the memory of the others to oblivion; and threatened to punish whoever should venture to commend them, or entertain their opinions. He showed in those letters also that he was angry with Eusebius because he had conspired against him and favored the party of the tyrant," Licinius. "In conformity therefore with those letters of the emperor, Eusebius and Theognis were ejected from their churches, and Amphion obtained that of Nicomedia, and Chrestos that of Nicæa."⁵ He deposed and banished Athanasius also.⁶

XII. He claimed the express sanction of God in these acts,

¹ Socratis, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 8. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 21.

² Socratis, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 14.

³ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 42.

⁴ "The emperor condemned Arius to exile, and wrote to the bishops in all directions and laies, ordering that they should hold him and his adherents as impious, that any of their books that could be found should be burned, so that no memorial either of him or his doctrine should circulate, and that if any one should be detected concealing one of their works instead of delivering it that it might be burned, he should be punished with death." Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 21.

⁵ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 21.

⁶ "The emperor being thus carried away and driven to anger, sentenced Athanasius to exile, and ordered him to reside in Gaul. Some say he did it in order to unite the church, as Athanasius had wholly refused to communicate with the Arians." Socratis, Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 35.

and ascribed to the decrees of the synods ratified by his edicts a divine authority, thereby arrogating as absolute a right to legislate over the laws of God, as God has to legislate over his subjects. In his letter to the church of Alexandria, he said of the synod of Nicæa, "that which three hundred bishops approved, is nothing else than the judgment of God; especially as the Holy Spirit indwelling in such men, teaches the divine will. Wherefore let no one of you doubt, let no one defer, but let all promptly return to the way of truth."¹ "He exhorted the Christians of Alexandria to dismiss all their differences, and agree in the faith imposed by the synod, inasmuch as it was no other than the sentence of God formed by the Holy Spirit through the harmony of so many bishops."²

XIII. He incorporated the Catholic church with the national government, by legalizing its worship, constituting himself its civil head, prohibiting all other Christian sects, giving it the right of holding and inheriting property, investing its bishops with a civil as well as ecclesiastical rule, and providing for their support from the public treasury,—thereby treating its relations to God as subordinate to its relations to him.

He first legalized its worship by an edict issued in conjunction with Licinius in the year 312; but gave liberty to the numerous and widely differing sects as well as to the Catholics, by which means dissent ceasing to be infamous, as it had before been, the discipline of the church was impaired. To remedy that evil, they issued another edict in the year 313, in which they gave liberty to all Christians, as well as others, to profess and exercise whatever religion they pleased, and yet legalized the religion of the Christians with the exception of the dissentients from the Catholics, guarantied them from all hinderance or molestation, and ordered the restoration to them of the places of worship and all other property, of which the persecuting emperors had deprived them, either as individuals, or as bodies. "We promulgated our will with an upright design, that no one should be denied the liberty of choosing and following the discipline and worship of the Christians, and that power should be given to each one of devoting his mind to that religion which he might think suited to him, that the Deity might retain his accustomed regard and benignity towards all. We therefore write again that it is our pleasure that the sects which were enumerated in our former letters to your devotion, should be wholly excluded, and whatever is alien from our benignity be removed, and that now freely and

¹ Socratis, *Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 9.*

² Sozomeni *Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 25.*

simply each of those who have chosen the religion of the Christians, should without molestation observe that religion itself,—not any of its heresies.

“We decree further also in favor of the Christians, that if their places in which they were formerly accustomed to assemble, and in respect to which a different direction was given in the former letter addressed to you, are found to have been purchased by any one either of the treasury or of any one else, they be restored to those Christians without money, without a demand of any other equivalent, and without any delay or hesitation; and that if any person have received those places as a gift, he immediately restore them to those Christians.

“And as the same Christians are known to have possessed not only the places in which it was their custom to assemble, but others also, pertaining not to individuals among them, but to their common right as a body, you will order all those to be restored without hesitation to those Christians, that is, to each body of them and synod.”¹

XIV. He constituted himself the civil head of the Catholic church, by arrogating and exercising the same right of legislation over it as he exercised over the civil empire, and expressly claiming that he was constituted by the Almighty the overseer of its external things, in the same manner as the bishops held that they were the overseers of its interior affairs. “To all under the rule of the Romans, both people and soldiers, the gates of idol-worship were closed, and every species of sacrifice interdicted. A law enjoined also the prefects of the provinces, that the Lord’s day should be religiously celebrated. By the emperor’s command they observed also the anniversaries of the martyrs, and honored in the churches the seasons of the feasts. All these things were done by the emperor zealously. Whence, appropriately, when he received the bishops at a feast, he asserted that he himself was a bishop, uttering these words in our hearing. ‘You indeed of the interior things of the church, but I am a bishop ordained of God of its exterior affairs.’ And therefore entertaining views conformably to his words, he exercised an oversight of all who were subject to his rule, and excited them as far as he was able to pursue a religious life.”²

XV. By the edict of Milan he recognised the right of the church to purchase and hold property, and reinstated the several congregations in the possession of the buildings and grounds

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 5.

² Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 23, 24.

which had been taken from them during the persecution ; and by a law, in the year 321, gave leave to his subjects to bequeath property to it by will. " Let every one at death have liberty to leave whatever property he pleases to the holy and venerable council of the Catholic church."¹

XVI. He released the ministers of the Catholic church from liability to civil offices, many of which being extremely burdensome, the enemies of the church intrigued to devolve on the Catholic clergy, that they might thereby vex and harass them. " As it is shown by many events that a contempt of that religion by which a high reverence of the divine majesty is maintained, is fraught with the greatest danger to the republic ; but that the adoption and observance of it procures the utmost good fortune to the Roman name, and eminent prosperity to all the affairs of men through God's beneficent providence, it is our pleasure that those men who, with becoming sanctity and observance of this law, devote themselves to the ministry of that divine religion, should receive a reward of their labors. I therefore wish those who in the province intrusted to you exercise the ministry of that holy religion in the church over which Cæcilianus presides, and who are usually called clergy, be held exempt from all civil offices whatever, so that they may not, through any error or sacrilege, be withdrawn from the worship that is due to the Deity, but rather without molestation serve in their own vocation."²

" We learn that the clergy of the Catholic church, contrary to the immunities granted them, are harassed by the agency of the heretics, by the nominations and appointments to civil offices which public custom requires. It is our pleasure, therefore, if your gravity finds any one so vexed, that another be substituted in his place, and that hereafter men of that religion be protected from such injuries."³

XVII. He released the Catholic clergy from taxes and from the jurisdiction of the civil courts, and invested the bishops with authority to decide their causes. " He exempted the clergy universally, by an express law, from taxes, permitted those who were litigating to appeal to the judgment of the bishops, if they chose to decline the civil magistrates, and their judgment was as authoritative, and prevailed over the other judges, as much as though it were rendered by the emperor. Their decisions the præfects of the provinces and the soldiers that served them carried into effect. The decrees of the synods also were unalterable."⁴

¹ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. ii. l. 4.

² Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. ii. l. 1, 2, 7.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 7.

⁴ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 9.

XVIII. He made provision for their support from the public treasury. "Constantine Augustus, to Cæcilianus, bishop of Carthage:—It being my pleasure that something should be appropriated for the expenses of certain of the ministers of the legitimate and holy Catholic religion, through all the provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, I have sent letters to Ursus, the most illustrious of the Catholics of Africa, and signified to him that he should pay to your gravity three thousand folles"—about eighty thousand dollars. "You therefore when you have received that sum, will order it to be distributed to those enumerated in the schedule sent to you by Hosius. And should you learn that any thing is wanting to accomplish my desire towards them all in respect to this, it will be your duty to ask immediately whatever you find is necessary from the procurator of our possessions, for I have directed him if your gravity asks any money of him to pay it without hesitation."¹

XIX. And finally, he debarred all Christians who dissented from the Catholic church from the peculiar privileges granted to the establishment, subjected them to the liabilities of other citizens, prohibited them from assembling by themselves for worship, and confiscated their property. "The privileges which we granted in consideration of religion, ought to be enjoyed only by the observers of the Catholic law. But heretics and schismatics we wish not only to be debarred from these immunities, but to be held liable and subjected to the various civil duties."²

XX. Along with these usurpations of authority over the prerogatives and the people of God, he introduced a flood of superstitions, errors, and idolatries, which debased the church, offended the true worshippers, and forced them at length to withdraw from the national establishment, in order to maintain the truths of the gospel and offer a pure homage.

Thus he not only introduced and sanctioned the veneration of the cross, by employing an image of it as the standard of his troops, causing its figure to be inscribed on the arms of the soldiers, treating the fiction of its discovery at Jerusalem and miraculous power as authentic, and countenancing the superstitious belief that it was a protection from death and danger, but he made it the object of direct worship. "Moreover the emperor honored that victory-giving standard, having had proof of the divinity in it by experiment; for by that the multitudes of the hostile armies were put to flight, by that the hosts of the invisible demons were driven away, by that the haughtiness of the ene-

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 6.

² Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 1.

mies of God was brought down, by that the tongues of the reviling and the impious were silenced, by that the barbarous tribes were subjugated, by that the deceits of superstitious error were detected, and to that the emperor, as though discharging a debt, erected in every part of the empire triumphal pillars."¹

He legalized and enjoined the homage and invocation of martyrs. "By his order the prefects of the provinces honored the anniversaries of the martyrs," of which their invocation was an element;² and he encouraged its continuance after his death, by preparing his tomb in the church of the apostles erected by him at Constantinople, in order "that he might be honored by their appellation, united to the assemblies there of God's people, partake of the sacred rites and mystical services, and have the benefit of a participation in the prayers."³

He sanctioned and legalized the assumption by the bishops of legislative authority over the laws and rights of God, by giving them a legal establishment, assembling them in council for the purpose of imposing their faith on the church, ratifying their decrees, and requiring the magistrates of the provinces to enforce them by the soldiery. And by augmenting the power of the bishops by constituting them civil magistrates, elevating them to new honors, advancing them to independence in a large degree of their flocks, and exalting them to wealth, he tempted them to accommodate their religion to his ignorance and superstition, depraved their manners and morals, and inflamed them with a boundless ambition. And by his example as a usurper of absolute authority over religion, and persecution of all who refused submission to his will, justified and encouraged their arrogant assumptions and remorseless tyranny. From the moment of his nationalization of the church it became an iron despotism. God was no longer allowed to be recognised as its sole lawgiver. No freedom of opinion was permitted; no liberty of worship allowed. Whoever dissented from the Catholic church was not only made infamous to the church itself by its canons and usages, but subjected to civil penalties, and the pure worshippers placed under the necessity either of sanctioning their impious assumptions, and uniting in their superstitions and idolatries, or withdrawing from their presence.

XXI. A body of the true people of God, thus disappointed in their expectation of a rule from princes professing Christianity more favorable to their purity and peace, retired into seclusion,

¹ Eusebii de Laud. Const. c. 9, p. 519.

² Eusebii de Vita. Const. lib. iv. c. 23.

³ Ibid. c. 71.

continued withdrawn from notoriety for many ages, and still subsists in total separation from the apostate church.

The church of the Waldenses has existed through every period of its history, in entire separation from the nationalized church of the kingdoms, to which the territory they inhabit has at different periods belonged. It has had a ministry of its own, consisting only of presbyters and deacons, and perpetuated by its own ordination. It has held, professed, and vindicated the great doctrines of the gospel, that God has the sole right to legislate in respect to his worship, that the Scriptures are the only authoritative rule of faith, that Christ is the only Redeemer, that his salvation is to be obtained only by a specific acceptance of him as a sacrifice and justifier, that whoever will may take the water of life freely, and that yet it is by the renewing agency of the Spirit alone that men are led to repentance, faith, and love; that neither rulers nor ecclesiastics have any right to oppress and persecute, but that all are required to live meekly, purely, and justly towards one another, and with fear, humility, faith, and love towards God.

It has disowned the authority alike of the civil magistrate and the nationalized church, to dictate its faith and worship. "They obstinately maintain that nothing that is not expressly commanded by Christ, or taught by the apostles, can ever be constituted a law by those of a later age, though decreed even by general synods, inasmuch as the later church has no legislative authority."¹

It has publicly disowned the Romish church as apostate, proclaimed the predictions of its overthrow, and relied on the promise of the redemption of the world and an everlasting kingdom of righteousness.²

It has been distinguished for simplicity, purity, and piety of manners.³ It has demonstrated the sincerity and strength of its faith and love, by an inflexible adherence to the gospel against

¹ Quicquid a Christo expressè dictum, aut ab apostolis traditum, non invenerint, etiam si hoc in sacris generalibus synodis sit definitum, hoc nulla lege introduci a posteris potuisse, obstinatè contendunt, quasi nullam posterior ecclesia habuerit statuendi auctoritatem. Claudii Scyssel, adv. Vald. fol. 10; quoted by Mr. Faber in his *Ancient Vallenses*, p. 426.

² Romanam Sedem Meretricem Magnam et errorum omnium magistram appellant. Claudii Scys. adv. Vald. f. 9. Neque censuram ecclesiasticam metuant, neque prælatorum et sacerdotum auctoritati tribuant quicquam. Claudii Scys. f. 7, quoted by Mr. Faber, p. 426.

³ Magnam habet speciem pietatis, eo quod coram hominibus, juste vivant, et bene omnia de Deo credant et omnes articulos qui in symbolo continentur. Reinerii de Hærit. c. iv. quoted by Mr. Faber, p. 273. Thuani Hist. lib. vi. tom. i. pp. 188, 189.

the arts of a deceitful and seductive priesthood, the trials of oppression by tyrannical rulers, and the terrors of a bloody and remorseless persecution for many ages.

There is adequate evidence that it has subsisted in the valleys of the Cottian Alps, through the whole period from the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty days. In the first place, there is no proof whatever that it has not. There is neither any evidence, indication, nor even pretence, that any other church than that holding the doctrines which the Waldenses held on their first attracting the notice of the persecuting powers in the eleventh century, had ever existed in those valleys. Next, it is admitted by their enemies that they have existed there more than seven hundred years, that they were among the earliest dissentients from the Catholic church, and that they claimed to have occupied the valleys in which they still reside, from the fourth century.¹ They themselves assert that their ancestors retreated into that seclusion on the apostasy of the church at the period of its nationalization, and have continued there without interruption and without apostasy, through every succeeding age. And that representation is rendered credible by the fact, that dissentients from the superstition and idolatry of the national church are known to have existed in the vicinity of their valleys in the beginning of the fifth, in the sixth, seventh, ninth, and tenth centuries.

And finally, they have been preserved and nourished there by the peculiar care of divine providence. With the exception of the Jews, there is no parallel in the history of nations of the preservation of a people through so vast a period, without a change of institutions, principles, or manners. There is no other instance of the perpetuation as a distinct community, of so small and helpless a people, through such a period, under perpetual oppression, and against the frequent endeavors, through seven hundred years, of powerful monarchs and remorseless ecclesias-

¹ *Inter omnes has sectas quæ adhuc sunt vel fuerunt, non est perniciosior ecclesiæ quam Leonistarum; et hoc tribus de causis. Prima est quia est diuturnior; aliqui enim dicunt quod duraverit a tempore Sylvestri; aliqui a tempore Apostolorum. Secunda, quia est generalior; fere enim nulla est terra in qua hæc secta non sit. Tertia, quia cum omnes aliæ sectæ inmanitate blasphemiarum in Deum audientibus horrorem inducant, hæc, scilicet Leonistarum magnam habet speciem pietatis.* "Of all the sects of the present or former times, no one is more mischievous to the church than that of the Waldenses, and for three reasons—it is of longer continuance, some referring it to the fourth, others to the first century; it is more widely diffused, being found in almost every country; and it is distinguished for its piety towards God, and virtue towards men." Reimer. de Hærit. c. iv. quoted by Mr. Faber in his *Ancient Vallenses*, p. 273.

tics to exterminate them. They were in 1686 driven from their valleys, but by extraordinary exertions and victories reconquered them in 1689, and were confirmed in the possession of them by their enemies : and God has repeatedly granted them wonderful deliverances in seasons of the most imminent danger, induced the rulers of distant nations to interpose in their behalf, and caused the pious of remote realms to encourage and sooth them in their sorrows, and relieve them in their poverty.

XXII. The assumptions and usurpations of Constantine were continued by his sons and successors. They assumed the right of assembling synods and dictating their legislation. Thus Constantius summoned the council of Constantinople in 338, of Serdica in 347, of Sirmium in 349 and 351, of Arles in 353, of Milan in 355, of Seleucia and Rimini in 359, of Antioch in 361, and others. Theodosius the Great summoned the first general council of Constantinople in 381 ; Arcadius the councils of Ephesus and Constantinople in 400 ; Theodosius II. the third general council of Ephesus in 431, and the fourth at Chalcedon in 451 ; Justinian the fifth at Constantinople in 541 ; Constantine III. the sixth in 680 ; and Irene the seventh in 786. They continued to legislate over the church and treat it as the creature of the state, ratified the decrees of the councils and incorporated them with the laws of the empire, endeavored to compel their subjects to acquiesce in their faith, persecuted those who refused to conform to the nationalized church, deposed and appointed bishops at their pleasure, and claimed the sanction of God in those acts.

All the conditions of the symbol thus met in the most conspicuous manner in Constantine and his successors, and continued to be characteristics of that dynasty, through all the ages that followed, to the subversion of the eastern empire.

Daubuz and some others exhibit the woman as symbolizing the nationalized church. But the agency ascribed to her indicates that she represents believers only. It is the spiritual, in distinction from the nationalized and apostate church, that retreats into the desert, and fulfils the office of a witness through the twelve hundred and sixty days. The nationalized church during that period unites with the wild beast, is the follower of a false instead of a true prophet, and is a persecutor instead of a martyr.

Mr. Mede, Mr. Whiston, Mr. Daubuz, Bishop Newton, Mr. Cuninghame, and others, regard her as representing the church or people of God, through the whole period from the first reception of the gospel by the gentiles, to the time of Constantine.

That, however, is inconsistent with the symbol. As her endeavor to bear, was at the period when the dragon had swept a third of the stars and cast them to the earth, it must have been not only after the first persecutions by Nero and Domitian, but doubtless after the first violences of that by Diocletian also, which were peculiarly directed against the teachers of the church, and drove many of them to exile, reduced many to silence by imprisonment, and tempted some to apostasy.

There are no indications that the Christians entertained a hope of a revolution of the government in favor of Christianity, until the time of Diocletian; nor any evidence of such an apostasy of the nominal church at large, that the people of God retired into seclusion, until after the elevation of Constantine. And finally, there is no more propriety in exhibiting her endeavor to bear, as extending through near three hundred years, than in ascribing an equal period to the dejection of the stars, or the assumption of her son.

Mr. Brightman, Dean Woodhouse, and some others, regard the dragon as representing the devil, and on the ground that Satan is in a subsequent vision denominated the dragon. That dragon, however, as will be shown in the comment on that passage, was not an animal, but the great fallen spirit himself, named the serpent from his assumption of that brute in Eden, and a wholly different being, therefore, from this ideal monster, and representing a wholly different class of agents. If this dragon be the symbol of the devil, and be employed as such because the devil assumed a serpent in his temptation of Eve, why was it not formed after the pattern of that serpent? Why was it invested with seven heads, seven diadems, and ten horns,—peculiarities which there is not the slightest ground to believe belonged to the serpent of Eden? Why is it represented as giving its throne and power, and great authority to the seven-headed wild beast, on the emergence of that monster from the sea? Did the devil abdicate his throne on that occasion, transfer his power to that great agent, and retire into seclusion? But the supposition is against analogy also, a bodied being having no adaptation to symbolize a mere spirit. Its animal nature, therefore, its peculiarity of form, and its surrender of its power, show, indubitably, that it is not a symbol of the devil, who is not a corporeal being, and who will never cease from his malignant endeavors, until bound and cast into the bottomless pit; but is a representative of the rulers of the same empire at an earlier period, as are symbolized after the conquest of the western half, by the seven-headed wild beast. Its heads, like

the heads of that monster, denote its seven species of chief magistrates, and its horns the kings of the ten kingdoms into which, after its subversion the western was divided.

Mr. Bush regards the dragon as symbolizing paganism in the twofold character of a despotic government, and a false religion. Agents, however, are symbols only of agents, not of mere species of opinion or modes of agency. He exhibits the symbol also as denoting the pagan despotic powers of all preceding time, especially those of Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome; and the purpose and action of the dragon in relation to the woman, as denoting the agency of those powers in all former ages towards the people of God. But that is so far to take from its agency its prophetic character, and treat it as merely historical. Though five of its heads, like those of the ten-horned wild beast, denote rulers of the Roman empire anterior to the vision, and are, therefore, merely historical, yet the agency of the dragon is indisputably significant of actions only that were future. To assume that the actions of symbolic agents are representative of the past as well as the future, is to deny to the visions the office solely of a prophecy, and render their meaning wholly uncertain. If a part of the agency denoted by the symbolic actions of this vision were already passed, what certainty is there that the whole was not a mere historical symbolization? But as the seven heads of this monster denote undoubtedly the same agents as the seven heads of Daniel's fourth wild beast, to make them representative of the dynasties of Babylonia, Persia, and Greece, is so far to make that fourth beast the representative of the same dynasties as were symbolized by the three former, which is indisputably incorrect. The interpretation given by the angel, shows that the four beasts were symbols of the rulers of four different nations. The heads of the fourth must accordingly be taken to denote seven different heads of the body of rulers which that monster symbolizes. The interpretation of the heads also given by the angel, implies that they were successive, not cotemporaneous; five are fallen; one is, and one is not yet come; and thence cannot be representative of the dynasties of Babylonia, Egypt, Media, and Greece, as well as Italy, as the nations of all those countries existed cotemporaneously and independently of each other, anterior to Daniel's vision.

Dean Woodhouse and Mr. Bush regard the woman as denoting the succession of true believers from the beginning to the incarnation, and the man child as Christ. But that is also to take from the symbol its prophetic office, and make it retrospective.

It is erroneous, moreover, to exhibit the incarnation of the Redeemer as in any manner the result of the endeavors of the ancient church.

Mr. Cuninghame exhibits the cry and endeavors of the woman, as denoting the exertions of the church in her first and purest age for the conversion of the gentiles, and the man-child as symbolizing the whole body of true converts within the Roman empire at the time of the nationalization of the church. But that is to exhibit the woman and man-child as representing the same class of persons, differing only in their period, which is incongruous. It is in contradiction to the symbols also, which not only exhibit the woman and man-child as cotemporaneous, as parent and offspring must be for at least a period, but represents the woman as surviving through many ages in the seclusion into which she was driven. But it was not the church in her first and purest age that retreated into the desert, and was there nourished through the dangers of twelve hundred and sixty years. It is to contradict analogy also. There is a resemblance between a woman's giving birth to a man-child, who may himself become a parent and transmit a long succession of descendants, and a community of Christians presenting to a great empire a race of Christian monarchs, either directly, by promoting the elevation of one of their own profession to the throne, or by their great influence in the state, inducing a candidate for the throne to make a profession of Christianity. But there is no resemblance between a woman's giving birth to a child, and the reception into itself by a church of a great body of converts from idolatry. The processes are the reverse of each other.

Sir Isaac Newton exhibits the woman as the symbol of the true primitive church, the period of her cry the persecution by Diocletian, the man-child a Christian empire, his assumption to heaven the elevation of Constantine to supreme power by his victory over Licinius, and the dragon as the Roman pagan empire. But neither the man-child nor the dragon represents an empire, living agents being representative only of living agents, never of inanimate objects; nor is an elevation to supreme civil power, the symbol of an assumption to the throne of God. It is an arrogation of his rights, that is employed to represent that assumption.

Mr. Mede exhibits the woman as the primitive church, the period of her cry the whole season of persecution by the pagan emperors, the man-child as the new converts to Christianity, and his assumption to heaven the elevation of the Christian party to po-

litical power under Constantine,—errors that are sufficiently refuted by what has already been said.

Mr. Faber regards heaven as a symbol of the visible church of the western Roman empire, the woman as representing the faithful members of that church, the dragon as a symbol of its unfaithful members, and the man-child as denoting the Vallenses and Albigenses as sequestered from the pure worshippers generally. The first assumption, however, is not only without authority, but implies that heaven is the same as the woman, the man-child, and the dragon, which is to confound the agents with the scene of their agency. It implies that the dejection of the stars by the dragon, is their excommunication from the visible church, in place, as he represents, of their seduction to apostasy. It implies, according to his construction of that symbol, that the dejection of Satan and his angels from heaven to the earth, was an excommunication from the visible church. It implies that the woman, too, when descending from heaven to the earth and flying to the desert, was either cast out of the visible church, or else voluntarily withdrew from it; and thence, that after Satan's fall and her flight, no visible church remained except that of the Vallenses and Albigenses. It implies that the agent symbolized by the sun on which the fourth vial was poured, was stationed in the visible church, yet he interprets that symbol of the French emperor Napoleon, whom he exhibits as an infidel, not a Christian ruler.

His interpretation of the dragon as a symbol of the unfaithful members of the visible church during the twelve hundred and sixty years, is equally untenable. He exhibits its first six heads as denoting the first six species of the supreme rulers of the Roman empire. But were they members of the Christian church? He exhibits it moreover, and the wild beast of ten horns, as symbols of the Roman empire geographically considered. But how, if a symbol of the mere territory, can it represent the unfaithful part of the visible church also? If it denote all apostate members of the visible church, how can its drawing one third of the stars and casting them to the earth be interpreted of its drawing one third of the ministers of the church to apostasy? Those already apostate do not require to be drawn to apostasy. Did it draw a portion of those to apostasy whom itself represents? That were to make it both the agent and the object of its agency; both the seducer and the seduced. Did it lead a portion of those into apostasy whom the woman symbolizes, or the man-child? That is as palpably in contradiction to the representation of the vision.

His views of the birth and the man-child, are equally unsatisfactory. If the woman denote all the faithful worshippers during the twelve hundred and sixty years, and the man-child a large part of those same worshippers, then the woman and her offspring are to that extent the same, as well after as before the birth, which is incongruous. There is no analogy whatever between a birth and the preservation or continuance of worshippers in the valleys of the Alps through a succession of ages, while all other communities of pure worshippers were dispersed, and none but isolated individuals allowed to survive. A birth is a commencement of life, their preservation is but their continuance as a community. The other cotemporaneous pure worshippers were no more the parent of the churches of the Alpine valleys, than the churches of those valleys were the parent of the other pure worshippers with whom they were cotemporary.

The sudden removal of the man-child from the dragon's presence and elevation to the throne of God, are thought by Vitringa to denote, not merely Constantine's extrication from the plots of the pagan emperors, but that he peculiarly enjoyed the approbation of God in the nationalization of the church, and reigned in an important sense as his representative. But Constantine and his successors are themselves symbolized by the seventh head of the dragon, and cannot therefore have been the objects of God's approbation, nor acted as his representative in their administration over the church. Not one of them, so far as there are now any means of judging, gave any evidence of piety. All of them, without exception, were persecutors; most of them were stained by the most enormous vices; and the visible church, in place of deriving any advantage from their course towards it, became, under their influence, so corrupted in doctrine and manners as to lose the character of a true church, and drive the true people of God into seclusion. The import of that exaltation of the man-child to the throne of God, is undoubtedly precisely the reverse of that which Vitringa ascribed to it, and denotes, on the one hand, his becoming an object of idolatrous homage, and on the other, his arrogation of the right, which belongs only to God, of appointing the faith and worship of his subjects, and exertion of that usurped power to corrupt religion, and oppress and persecute the people of God,—crimes of which Constantine and his successors were indisputably guilty, which were the reason that the woman fled into the desert, and which rendered it proper that they should be exhibited as a head of the dragon.

SECTION XXIX.

CHAPTER XII. 7-12.

THE WAR OF MICHAEL.

AND there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting with the dragon, and the dragon fought also and his angels, and prevailed not, nor was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down; the old serpent, who is called devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world, was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

And I heard a great voice in heaven saying, Now is the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Anointed, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, is cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life unto death. Wherefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye who dwell in them. Woe to the land and to the sea; for the devil is gone down to you having great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time.

This serpent is obviously a wholly different being from the great red dragon which endeavored to devour the man-child. There is no indication that he is an animal. There is no ascription to him of seven heads, seven diadems, ten horns, a tail that swept the stars, nor an appetite for flesh. Instead, and to distinguish him from that dragon, he is defined as the ancient serpent, who is called devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; titles which belong only to that great apostate spirit who seduced our first mother, and an agency that is exerted alone by him. He is a serpent, too, having subordinates of a similar nature, that fight under his standard. But the seven-headed dragon had no troops of a nature like his own. That, in short, was a fictitious monster; this dragon and his angels are real existences. This is apparent also from the scene of the contest. It were incongruous to exhibit a dragon, an inhabitant of water, as elevated to the atmosphere, and contending there with an angelic being, as though in its natural element. When the woman was exhibited in the sky, she was represented as having the moon as a support under her feet. This is confirmed finally by the nature of his opponents, and the actions ascribed to them. They are Michael, an archangel, and his subordinate angels, and they

make war. As the armies are thus of the same species, and exert the same species of acts, their chiefs are doubtless also of the same nature.

Here, then, an obedient archangel and his subordinates, on the one hand, and the great apostate angel Satan, and his subordinate spirits on the other, are exhibited as waging a war with one another, in which Satan, unable to maintain his ground, is at length driven from heaven, and dejected with his angels to the earth. And they are representatives of men, manifestly from the song of those in heaven which follows, in which the conquerors are exhibited as not loving their life unto death, which is predicable only of men and of martyrs, not of angels; and as overcoming their adversaries by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony, which is predicable only of witnesses for God and believers in Christ. Michael and his angels, then, are symbols of believers in Christ, who gain a victory by faith in his blood, by proclaiming his word, and by submitting to martyrdom, rather than swerve from fidelity to him. And the victory is deemed to indicate the approach of the kingdom of God, and the triumphant reign of Christ. Satan and his angels, on the other hand, symbolize antagonists of believers, who endeavor by contradiction to countervail, or persecution to prevent their testimony, and maintain the supremacy of idolatry. It is shown also by the representation, that Satan accused their brethren before God, that the question between them was one of religion, not of political power.

The kingdom of God chanted by the voice from heaven, the scene of the war, as at hand, is the kingdom that is to be established at the final overthrow of antichrist, in which the Messiah is visibly to reign. That chant was uttered by the victors, and indicates that the church was to regard its growth to a majority, and the change in public feeling, by which its persecution had become unpopular even with multitudes of the pagans, as insuring the speedy advent of Christ, and commencement of his millennial reign. The heavens summoned to rejoice, are the new heavens, the symbol of the risen and glorified saints, who are to descend with the Redeemer, and reign with him as kings. They who dwell in those heavens, are the sanctified nations who are to live under their sway. On the other hand, the land and the sea, contradistinguished from the new heavens and they who dwell in them, denote the nations at rest and in agitation, anterior to the establishment of that millennial kingdom. That the dejection of Satan and his angels was to be a woe to the earth and the sea, indicates that the decline of the pagan party into a mi-

nority, was to exasperate its priests and rulers, and lead them to more violent methods to overwhelm their antagonists, and restate themselves in authority. From the persecution of the woman, and attempt by the seven-headed dragon to destroy her during her flight to the desert, which are exhibited in the vision that follows, it is seen that the period of this contest was anterior to her retreat into seclusion, and the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty years.

This angel war, then, it is apparent from these characteristics, was symbolic of the struggle of the faithful teachers, confessors, and martyrs of the gospel on the one hand, to spread and give supremacy to Christianity, and of the pagan priests and their active abettors, the persecuting rulers especially on the other, to maintain the dominion of idolatry. It was not a strife for political power, manifestly from the means by which the victory was gained. They overcame the dragon, not by the sword, but by the blood of the Lamb, and by their testimony. It were against the law of symbolization also, to interpret it as a literal war. As the symbol war was one of force, analogy requires that that which it symbolizes should be one of authority and persuasion. The victory of Michael was such a success of the Christian army as to turn the current of public belief and feeling in their favor, and produce at length a revolution in the civil government, by which, instead as before, of accusation as apostates, they were formally recognised as true worshippers of God, tolerated in their faith and worship, and inspired with the expectation that the commencement of Christ's millennial reign was at hand. The period of this war was the period therefore of the persecutions by Diocletian, Galerius, Maxentius, Maximin, and Licinius; and the victory, that change of public feeling wrought by the testimony and faith of the teachers of the gospel, and sufferings and constancy of the confessors and martyrs, that rendered persecution and paganism itself unpopular, prompted Constantine to espouse the cause of the Christians, and finally led to the rejection of paganism as the religion of the state.

I. The persecution by Diocletian and Galerius, instead of weakening the church, and adding strength to the pagans, produced the opposite effect. The horrible evils inflicted on the unoffending and virtuous Christians, touched multitudes of the idolaters with sympathy and sorrow; while their invincible constancy, and the joy and exultation with which they met the most ignominious and hideous death, impressed them with wonder, begat the feeling that they were supported by a supernatural power, and thus

gave birth to the wish that they should be freed from persecution, and allowed the profession of their religion in peace. On the other hand, the merciless oppression by those tyrants of the whole body of their subjects, pagan as well as Christian, excited a general terror and disgust of such rulers, and desire for the elevation to power of just and tolerant princes, like Constantius Chlorus. Thus Lactantius :—" Another reason that the people of God are permitted to be persecuted is, that they may be multiplied. Nor is it difficult to show why or how that takes place. Many are repelled from the worship of the gods by a dislike of their cruelty ; for who does not regard their sacrifices with horror ? Some approve of virtue and the faith. Some are led to suspect that it is not without cause that the worship of the gods is regarded as wrong by so many, who prefer to die rather than do that which others do that they may live. Some feel a desire to know what that good is which is adhered to even to death, which is preferred to all that is pleasing and dear in life, from which neither the loss of goods nor of light, neither pains of body nor tortures of the heart can deter. Such considerations have great influence, but the causes that have chiefly augmented our number are these :—The crowd standing around, hear the martyrs say in the midst of their torments, that they sacrifice not to statues made by the hands of man, but to the living God, who is in heaven. Many perceive and feel that this is true. Then, as is usual in regard to things that are not understood, in asking one another what the cause can be of that perseverance, many things that pertain to religion are introduced, investigated, and learned, which, from their excellence, necessarily give pleasure. Moreover, persecution itself, as always happens, strongly impels to belief. Nor is it a slight cause that of the multitudes whom the impious spirits of demons enter, all who are healed by their expulsion adhere to the religion whose power they have experienced. These numerous causes united, have drawn a great multitude in a wonderful manner to God."¹

As the persecution of the Christians thus multiplied their number, so the insupportable tyranny of their persecutors, led the population generally, pagan as well as Christian, to wish for their destruction, and to hail Constantine's victory as a deliverance. Constantine himself represents the population at large as murmuring under the cruel oppressions and wanton slaughters to which they were subjected by Diocletian, Galerius, Maxentius, Maximin, and Licinius, and as cherishing their love of free-

¹ Lactantii Inst. lib. v. de Just. c. 22.

dom, and invoking God to deliver them. "The issue of their tyrannical course was predicted by the intelligent, for they were neither silent, nor concealed their lamentations at those outrages, but openly and publicly, without reserve, said to one another, 'What madness! what insolence of power in men to dare to make war on God, to delight to insult a most holy and righteous religion, and without provocation plot the destruction of such a multitude of just men!'" "At length divine providence took vengeance of their impious deeds, not, however, without the injury of the public; for the slaughters that have been perpetrated, had they been slaughters of the barbarians, would be enough to ensure an eternal peace; for the whole army of Diocletian being subjected to the power of the rude man who seized the government of the empire by force, after God had liberated the capital, was wasted in numerous wars. But how do the cries to God of those who were oppressed, and desired their natural liberty, and after the removal of those evils, the offerings of thanks to him for the restoration of freedom and justice, bespeak his care and love towards men."¹

Accordingly on Constantine's entering Rome after the defeat and death of Maxentius, "the whole senate, all the superior orders, and the people with their wives and children, received him with glad countenances, shouts, and exultation, as their liberator, saviour, and benefactor."²

II. The question which of their religions was genuine and to prevail, was considered by both parties as on trial in the contest of that period, and to be determined by its issue.

Such were the views of Constantine: "The whole body of foot and horse was assembled by him, and at their head was borne the cross, the symbol of a good hope in God. Moreover, aware that then if ever he needed prayers, he took the priests of God with him, regarding their continual presence as a protection of his life. Licinius naturally, on learning that Constantine made his preparation for victory over his enemies, as though it were to be gained only through God's co-operation, that the priests whom I have mentioned were continually present and communicating with him, and the standard of the cross always borne before him and his troops, thought it ridiculous, and mocked and traduced him. He, however, collected around himself Egyptian seers and diviners, enchanters, jugglers, and the priests and prophets of those whom he regarded as gods, and

¹ Const. Orat. ad Sanct. Cœt. c. 25.

² Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 9.

having propitiated his deities with the sacrifices which he thought requisite, then inquired what was to be the issue to him of the war; and they unanimously replied that he was undoubtedly to prove the strongest in the contest, and be victorious; and that in long and elegant songs the oracles everywhere promised. The interpreters also announced that success was indicated by the flight of birds, and the priests asserted that similar things were denoted by the motion of the entrails. Elated by these deceitful promises, he advanced to the camp with great confidence, and arranged his troops, as far as he was able, for the battle. And when he was about to begin the contest, he summoned the most trusty and honored of his attendants and friends to one of the places which they regard as sacred, a consecrated grove, spacious and irrigated, in which were erected all kinds of sculptured statues of those whom he esteemed gods, and having lighted wax tapers, and offered the accustomed victims to them, he is said to have uttered the following address.

“ ‘ Friends and fellow-warriors, these are the gods of our fathers, whom, received from our earliest ancestors as objects of worship, we honor; but he who commands the army that is drawn up against us, having adopted an atheistic opinion, violates the customs of the fathers, venerating a god from abroad, I know not whence, and disgraces his troops with his ignominious standard, trusting in which he arms not so much against us as against the gods whom he offends. This occasion therefore will show which of us errs in his belief, and decide between the gods who are honored by us and by the other party: for either by showing us victors, it will show our gods are most justly regarded as auxiliaries and saviours; or if the God of Constantine, come from I know not where, shall prevail over ours, who are many, let no one thereafter doubt what God ought to be worshipped, but go to the strongest and present to him the reward of the victory. If the foreign God, whom we now deride, should appear the mightiest, we must acknowledge and honor him, and bid adieu to those to whom we have vainly lit wax tapers. But if ours prevail, which is not to be doubted, then after the victory we must proceed to a war against the atheists.’ ”¹

The victory was accordingly regarded by Constantine, the church, and the people at large, as the victory of the true God over the false, of Christianity over idolatry. “When the whole was by the power of God the Saviour subjected to him, he made known to all the giver of his prosperity, and testified that God,

¹ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. ii. c. 3, 4, 5.

not he, was the author of his victories."¹ And on the release of the confessors from the mines and prisons by the edict of Galerius and Maximin, "All the unbelieving were struck with astonishment and admiration at the extraordinary change, and exclaimed, 'Great and alone true is the God of the Christians.'"²

III. The legal recognition of the Christian religion by Constantine, and patronage of its teachers and professors, inspired a general persuasion that the happy period denoted by the kingdom of God, and triumphant reign of Christ on earth, was at hand.

"On the fall of Licinius, the great conqueror Constantine and his son Crispus the Cæsar received the east as theirs, established one government as formerly over the Romans, and swayed the whole in peace from east to west, and from north to south. The people therefore being freed from all fear of the court with which they had before been overwhelmed, held festal days with great splendor. There were everywhere illuminations. They who were before dejected, looked on one another with joyful aspects and smiles, and with choirs and hymns through the cities and country, gave honor first to God the supreme ruler of all as they were taught, and then to the pious emperor and his children. The miseries and impiety of the past were forgotten; joy and exultation prevailed at the blessings now promised, and happy anticipations of the future. Philanthropic edicts were everywhere published by the emperor, and laws that displayed his munificence and piety."³

Lactantius also: "Let us celebrate the triumph of God with gladness; let us commemorate his victory with praise; let us make mention in our prayers day and night of the peace, which after ten years of persecution, he has conferred on his people."⁴

IV. The voice uttered from heaven the scene of the victory, "Now is the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Anointed," had a signal counterpart in the congratulations and exultation of the church at that period.

Eusebius represents the victors at the precipitation of Maxentius and his attendants into the Tyber, as saying like Moses at the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, "Let us sing to the Lord, for he is signally glorified. Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord my helper and defender was

¹ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. ii. c. 23. Constantini Orat. ad Sanct. Cæt. c. 22. Eusebii Orat. de laud. Const. c. 6, 7, 9.

² Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 1. Orat. de laud. Const. c. 9, pp. 518, 519.

³ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 9. De Vita Const. lib. ii. c. 19.

⁴ Lactantii de Mort. Persecut. c. 52.

with me unto salvation. Who, O Lord, is like to thee among gods? Who is like to thee, glorified by the holy, admirable in praise, doing wonders? Constantine entered Rome in triumph, hymning these and similar passages to God the author of the victory.¹ And on the fall of Licinius, he represents the church as uniting in thanksgiving for the deliverance, and congratulations at the overthrow of idolatry, and establishment of Christ's kingdom; and devotes the tenth book of his history to the edicts of the emperor by which the church was nationalized and endowed, and to the restoration of the temples, and the public rejoicings at their dedication. "Let thanks be given by all to the Almighty Ruler of the universe, and to Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer, through whom we pray that peace from external foes may be uninterruptedly preserved to us, and tranquillity of mind." "Let us sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done wonderful things. His right hand has saved him, and his holy arm. The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the presence of the nations. We may now appropriately respond to the inspired command to sing a new song, inasmuch as after such direful spectacles and narrations, we now have the happiness to see and celebrate, what many holy men before us and the martyrs for God, desired to see on earth, and did not see, and to hear and have not heard. But advancing more rapidly, they attained far superior gifts in heaven, being caught up to the paradise of celestial joy; while we acknowledge the gifts we enjoy are greater than we deserve, and contemplate with wonder the largeness of the divine bounty. Admiring and adoring with all our souls, we testify to the truth of the prophet's words, 'Come and see the works of the Lord, what wonders he has wrought in the earth, abolishing wars to the ends of the world. The bow he has broken, he has dashed the arms, the shield he has burned in the fire.' Rejoicing at the manifest fulfilment of these predictions to us, we go on with our history." He goes on accordingly to represent the whole population, freed from the domination of the tyrants, and relieved from oppression, as acknowledging the only true God and protector of the pious, and those especially who had placed their hope in Christ, as filled with inexpressible joy; the ministers everywhere delivering commemorative addresses, and the whole multitude offering praises and thanksgiving to God.²

V. The predictions of a woe to the land and the sea from the overthrow of the idolatrous party, had a signal fulfilment in the

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 9.

² Ibid. lib. x. c. 1, 2, 3.

exasperation and violence of the pagan chiefs towards their subjects generally, as well as the church, from the defeat of Maxentius to the final fall of paganism. Maximin, the emperor of Asia Minor; Syria, and Egypt, suspended the persecution on the fall of Maxentius, and the grant of toleration to the church by Constantine and Licinius, but soon renewed it with far greater violence, and an avowed purpose of exterminating the church from his dominions. Persons of distinction were appointed to the pagan priesthood in all the cities, the rites renewed with pomp and zeal, and the magistrates and people given to understand that they could do nothing more acceptable to the prince, than to assail and slaughter the Christians. They accordingly plotted against them in extraordinary ways, suborning the most profligate accusers, and traducing them by the most infamous imputations, by which the magistrates of all the provinces were induced to assail and persecute them with greater fury than at any former period.¹

Licinius, who succeeded him in the empire of the east, in 319 renewed the war on them, and continued it with the utmost virulence till his fall in 323. He began by encouraging false accusations against the bishops; then enacted arbitrary laws prohibiting them from assembling in synods, entering each other's churches, or communicating with one another, in order that he might generate pretexts for putting them to death. He banished all who held the Christian faith from the palace, and from his retinue, and drove them into exile; and threatened death to all who should thereafter profess Christianity. He prohibited men from assembling with women in churches for worship, and the bishops from giving religious instruction to any but their own sex, ordered that their assemblies should be held only without the gates of the cities, and in the open air; and forbade their supplying those with food who were imprisoned, and left without any provision by the magistrates:² and at length proceeded to open and direct war on the ministers and members of the churches, subjecting them to the most horrible tortures, slaughtering them in great numbers, and endeavoring to exterminate them from his dominions. Multitudes fled from the cities to the country, to deserts, and to mountains. Some escaped to the western empire, and the whole would have soon shrunk from sight, or been devoured, had not Constantine interposed and extricated them from his power.³

¹ Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. ix. c. 4, 5, 6. Pagi Crit. in Baron. an. 314, no. vi.-x.

² Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. i. c. 51-56. ³ Ibid. lib. ii. c. 1, 2.

Mr. Brightman, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Elliott, and others, regard the war symbolized by the strife of the angels, as the war between Constantine and Maxentius, Maximin and Licinius for political power. But that is against analogy. It is to make the symbolic act, and that which it represents, of the same species. As all the subordinates of Michael were good angels, it assumes that all the subordinates of Constantine were Christians and witnesses for God, which is notoriously unauthorized. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that his army was essentially less heathen, than was that of Maxentius, Maximin, or Licinius. His attempts at a subsequent period to christianize his soldiers, show that they were at least generally idolaters.¹

The supposition that it was a struggle for political power, is inconsistent with the means by which the triumph was gained, the blood of the Lamb, and their testimony, and with the nature of the victory, which was not an elevation of the conqueror to political power, but the dejection of the vanquished, and preclusion from a further accusation of the witnesses. Exemption from persecution, and freedom of faith and worship, were the blessings which believers attained, and which were the ground of their expectation, that the gospel would thereafter prevail without obstruction, and the reign of Christ soon commence, when the whole world should become subject to his dominion.

Dean Woodhouse regards the war as a strife in heaven between good and evil angels, at the period of Satan's expulsion from his primeval seat. But that is to disregard the symbolic nature of the vision, and treat it as history, instead of prophecy. If the prophetic meaning may be excluded from this passage, what reason can be given that it may not from every other?

Vitringa regards Michael as symbolizing Christ. But that is against the law of analogy, no creature, however exalted, having any adequacy to represent him. It is in contradiction also to the representation, that the victors overcame their enemies by the blood of the Lamb. How can Christ be said to overcome in the same manner as the witnesses through faith in his blood? The supposition of Cocceius that Michael is Christ himself, is equally obnoxious to this objection.

Mr. Faber regards the war as a strife between the teachers of the Latin church, and pure and Protestant teachers, during the twelve hundred and sixty years. But that interpretation is founded on the assumption that heaven, in which the symbol war was exhibited, denotes the visible church, which is not only without

¹ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 19, 20, 21.

authority, but implies that heaven and the warriors, so far as the latter constitute the visible church, are the same, which is to confound the mere scene of the conflict with the agents. It implies, also, that the ejection of Satan and his angels from heaven, denotes an excommunication of all the priests whom they represent, from the visible church. But no such universal excommunication of priests from the Catholic church has taken place, or can. As in that communion the power of excommunication is held exclusively by the priests themselves, it is not possible that by any process conformable with their canons, an excommunication should be pronounced on every individual of their order.

It is in contradiction also to the prophecy, to exhibit the period of the war as the same as the twelve hundred and sixty years of the woman's residence in seclusion, as the ejection of Satan and his angels from heaven is expressly represented as anterior to her flight into the desert.

SECTION XXX.

CHAPTER XII. 13-17.

THE FLIGHT OF THE WOMAN.

AND when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he followed after the woman who brought forth the male child. And two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, that she should fly into the desert, into her place, where she is nourished there a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

And the serpent cast from its mouth, after the woman, water as a river, that it might cause her to be carried away. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank the river which the dragon cast out of its mouth. And the dragon was angry with the woman and went on to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus.

The dragon who followed the woman, symbolizes the pagan priests and their abettors, who had been defeated in their attempt to maintain their idol-worship, and fallen into the minority. Their following after her, denotes their attempt to join her society by a profession of Christianity.

The serpent that cast from its mouth water, was not the devil who fought with Michael, the symbol of the pagan party, but the monster dragon of seven heads, as is apparent from that act, which is appropriate to an inhabitant of water, but not to an angelic being. It represents the rulers of the Roman empire, therefore, from the elevation of Constantine to the fall of the western dynasty, and thence, the eastern dynasty to its extinction by the Turks.

The gift to the woman of the wings of an eagle, denotes that aids were granted her in her flight, that were supernatural, and peculiarly suited to bear her above the dangers with which she was threatened by the intrusion of pagans into the church. As the wings were an addition to her body, and became a part of her nature, they denote not an exterior instrument, but a gift that formed a part of herself, and an intellectual and spiritual gift, therefore, knowledge, faith, wisdom, constancy, love, by which she was borne above the torrent of false doctrines, superstitious rites and idolatries, in which the dragon endeavored to engulf her.

As it is appropriate to a monster dragon, which may be supposed, like behemoth, to draw up Jordan into its mouth, to represent it as ejecting water as a river to bear away the woman, so the means employed by the rulers of the Roman empire, symbolized by the dragon, to destroy the true people of God, must be supposed to be such as were appropriate to their peculiar character as usurpers of his rights, and patrons of superstition and idolatry. And they were doubtless the flood of false doctrines, and superstitious and impious rites, introduced by Constantine and his successors.

The earth which absorbed that flood, denotes the people generally of the empire, who eagerly embraced the religion thus adulterated to their taste, and by their conspicuous and exulting reception of it, occupied the attention of the rulers, and allowed the small body of dissentients to escape from their sight.

Her retreat into her place from the face of the serpent, denotes that the scene of her residence was unknown to the rulers. The anger of the serpent indicates their continued disposition to destroy her, if in their power; while its going on to make war with such of her seed as had not retreated to the desert, denotes that they continued, after her disappearance, to persecute the isolated individuals that from time to time dissented from the corrupt church, and professed the pure faith.

The time, times, and half a time, the period of the woman's

residence in the desert, denotes twelve hundred and sixty years, a time being a year or three hundred and sixty days, times two years or seven hundred and twenty days, and half a time one hundred and eighty, which united are twelve hundred and sixty.

These symbols then indicate, that on the usurpation by Constantine and his successors of authority over the church, the pure worshippers began to dissent, withdraw from the public assemblies, and worship apart; that on the nationalization of the church, a crowd of pagans soon entered it; that a vast torrent of corrupt doctrines and rites, was introduced into its faith and worship by the emperors and their subordinates, that threatened to bear away the true people of God, from the impulse of which they were signally protected; that a body of them retired from the observation of the rulers, into a place where they were sustained through a long period; and that the rulers continued to wreak their malice on the individuals, who rose from time to time in the empire, and dissented from the popular faith.

These symbolizations had a signal fulfilment in the dissentients from the nationalized church, and the conduct of the rulers towards them, from Constantine through a long succession of ages.

I. On the nationalization of the church by that emperor, a vast body of pagans entered it, and verified the prediction that after being cast to the earth they should follow the woman.

Eusebius asserts, "That two great evils distinguished the reign of Constantine, the violence of profligate and insatiable men, who harassed every condition of life; and the indescribable hypocrisy of those who entered the church, and deceitfully assumed the Christian name." And he represents their promiscuous assumption of the new religion, as occasioned in a large degree, by the emperor's treating the mere profession as a satisfactory proof of a genuine conversion.¹

It was natural that crowds of the worldly should be drawn to the church, when Christianity became the religion of the court, and a profession of it a passport to office and honor. As he employed it, as he openly avowed, as a means of strengthening the state, and for that reason required all denominations to conform to the establishment, he was naturally inclined to encourage the profession, although no indications appeared of a sincere conviction of its truth. He offered it as a reason in his letter to Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and to Arius, of his urging them to lay aside their differences, and return to peace, that the two great objects at which he aimed in his administration were,

¹ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. iv. c. 54.

first, to unite all nations in the profession of the same religion ; and next, to relieve the empire from the evils with which it was oppressed as with a disease ; that the first he endeavored to accomplish by persuasion, the other by arms ; knowing that if he could produce a unanimity of all the worshippers of God according to his wishes, the administration of the government would then generate changes conformable to their harmonious and pious designs ;¹ and he asserted that the barbarous nations, who had been turned from idols to the faith by his instrumentality, “ paid their worship to God through fear of him.”²

II. Constantine and his successors introduced a flood of false doctrines, superstitions, and idolatries, into the church, which were incompatible with a pure worship, and swept all who yielded to their impulse, to the gulf of apostasy. Such were the veneration of the cross, and ascription to it of miraculous powers, the homage of relics, the invocation of saints, the conversion of religion into gorgeous ceremonies, the encouragement of celibacy, and the arrogation of the throne and prerogatives of God by civil and ecclesiastical rulers. These falsehoods, follies, and impieties, introduced or adopted by the emperors, encouraged by their example, sanctioned by their laws, and enforced by the penalties of excommunication, imprisonment, the forfeiture of civil rights, banishment, and death, came armed with an overpowering force to all who were not fortified against them by the special aids of the divine Spirit, and like a resistless torrent, bore away the great mass of the church.

III. There were in the latter part of the fourth century, and in the ages that followed, many who disapproved of the interference of the civil rulers with the church, and rejected the errors, superstitions, and idolatries, with which they debased its doctrines and worship.

Even Hosius of Corduba, who had not only approved of the arrogation of authority over the church by Constantine, and counselled him, it is represented, in all the great measures of his administration over it,—in giving it a civil establishment, in summoning the synod of Nicæa, in enforcing its decrees, in the deposition and banishment of the Arian bishops,—and who still regarded the emperor as having the right to assemble councils, and as bound to execute the canons of the orthodox ; yet when that power was turned by Constantius against him and his fellow-bishops, who held the faith of Nicæa, and in favor of the

¹ Eusebii de Vita Const. lib. ii. c. 65.

² Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 28.

unprincipled and plotting Arians, remonstrated against it as a most unjustifiable usurpation, and dangerous encroachment on the prerogatives of the hierarchy. When solicited to subscribe the sentence denounced against Athanasius by the synod of Milan, and threatened like all who should refuse to unite in his condemnation with disgrace, chains, exile, and confiscation of goods, he wrote to Constantius: "I became a confessor first in the persecution by your grandfather Maximian, and if you persecute me, am now ready to endure any thing, rather than shed innocent blood, and betray the truth. I do not approve of your writing and threatening such things. Refrain from it. Do not cherish the doctrines of Arius. Do not listen to the eastern bishops, nor trust the partisans of Ursacius and Valens; for what they say they utter not so much out of disapprobation of Athanasius, as to advance their own party." "Why do you still listen to those detractors, Valens and Ursacius, who have confessed, by penance and in writing, that they were guilty of a calumny?" "But if they complain of violence, and acknowledge it to be unjustifiable, and it is disapproved by you, then refrain from compulsion, and neither write, nor send officers, but release those who are exiled, that that party may not, while you are complaining of violence, commit still greater outrages. For what of that kind was done by Constans? What bishop was exiled? Who interfered with ecclesiastical decisions? What courtier of his compelled subscription to an accusation of any one, that the adherents of Valens should talk thus? Refrain then, I beseech you, and remember that you are a mortal; fear the day of judgment; keep yourself pure in order to it. Do not intrude yourself into ecclesiastical affairs, nor counsel us in regard to them; but rather learn them from us. God has intrusted to you the empire. He has committed the affairs of the church to us; and as he who usurps your government contravenes the ordinance of God, so beware lest you become obnoxious to a heavier accusation by grasping a jurisdiction over the church."¹

But his remonstrances were unsuccessful. Though dismissed on that occasion, he was soon recalled from Spain, held in exile a year, and at length at the council of Sirmium in 357, when near his hundredth year, scourged until overcome, he reluctantly assented to the Arian creed.²

Similar sentiments were uttered on the same occasion by Eusebius, bishop of Vercelli, who denounced the emperor to his face as a false Christian, and the bishops of his party as Anti-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. iii. pp. 243-246.

² Labbei Concil. tom. iii. p. 255.

christ, and had a like experience of the power which the hierarchy had assisted the emperors in assuming. Dragged from the synod by the Arians, he was first cruelly beaten, next drawn up and down a stone stairway, until the steps were wet with his blood, then scourged again to the verge of death, and at length dispatched into exile. The attempts of the emperor to compel Liberius, bishop of Rome, to unite in condemning Athanasius without a trial, were resisted by him likewise, and his obstinacy rewarded by deposition and banishment.¹ Hilary of Poitiers also addressed to him similar entreaties and remonstrances. "Your beneficent nature, happy Augustus, is in harmony with a benign will. We are confident therefore that we shall easily obtain what we solicit. We implore not merely with words, but with tears, that the Catholic churches may no longer be subjected to the most cruel injuries, and overwhelmed with insults and persecution by our brethren. Let your clemency provide by an edict, that the judges to whom the administration of the provinces is intrusted, to whom the care of civil affairs alone should belong, should abstain from the supervision of religion, and not presume to usurp the cognizance of the causes of the clergy, and harass and crush the innocent with threats, violence, terrors, and every species of injury. Your wisdom is aware that it is not becoming, it is not right, by force to compel the unwilling and reluctant to submit and addict themselves to those who are perpetually scattering the corrupt seeds of false doctrine. Wherefore as you endeavor to sway the empire by wise counsels, watch and provide that all whom you rule may enjoy the sweets of liberty. The agitated can never be tranquillized, the alienated can never be united in harmony, unless every one is freed from servile subjection, and allowed to enjoy perfect liberty. Assuredly the voice ought to be heard by your clemency, of those who cry, 'I am a Catholic, I am unwilling to be a heretic, I am a Christian, not an Arian; and it is better for me to die in this world, than contaminate the pure virginity of the truth through the tyrannical power of any individual.' It should be equally apparent to your sanctity, august monarch, that they who fear God and his judgment, ought not to be contaminated by execrable blasphemies, but have power to follow their bishops and superiors, who preserve the laws of love inviolate, and desire sincere and perpetual peace. It is not reasonable, it is not possible, that elements that are repugnant should concur, that things that are unlike should unite, true and false intermin-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. iii. p. 250.

gle, light and darkness become confounded. If, therefore, as we confidently hope and believe, these considerations move your innate goodness, order that the prefects of the provinces should not yield countenance nor aid to these tyrannical heretics. Let your lenity allow the people to hear those teachers whom they desire, to celebrate the sacraments, and offer prayers for your safety and happiness, with whomsoever they approve and choose."¹

It is apparent that these complaints and entreaties, were expressive, not merely of his own sentiments, but those of a great body of the clergy and people. But he, like his associates, found the despot inexorable, and was driven into exile, and becoming alarmed and exasperated by the outrages to which the orthodox were subjected, soon resorted to reproaches and denunciations, instead of intreaties and flattery, and endeavored by public and violent appeals, to arouse the church to a sense of its danger from such a remorseless tyranny.² This terrible experience of the lawlessness of the power, which these bishops had sanctioned Constantine in assuming, and exercising over dissentients from the Catholic church, was adapted to open their eyes to its interference with the rights of God, and the danger with which it threatened the truth, and lead them to a realization of the infinite distance between the incommunicable prerogatives of the Almighty, and the legitimate claims of human rulers. And it undoubtedly gave birth to a similar conviction in multitudes.

In like manner, during the reign of Valens, Basil and a great crowd of the orthodox clergy and people throughout the east, resisted the mandates, and remonstrated against the persecutions of that tyrant.³

But the tyranny of the emperors was not the only cause of dissatisfaction and remonstrance. It is apparent from the canons of the councils, and the imperial laws prohibiting religious assemblies separately from the nationalized church, that there were many dissentients from the established faith and worship. Thus the fifth canon of the council of Antioch, held in 341, by which presbyters and deacons were forbidden to secede from the church, hold separate assemblies, and disregard the commands of the bishops, indicates that there were persons of those orders who dissented from the established hierarchy, threw off allegiance to it, and held assemblies by themselves.⁴ The acts of the

¹ Hilarii Lib. adv. Constant. pp. 1218, 1219, 1220.

² Hilarii Lib. contra Constant. pp. 1237-1260.

³ Theodoriti Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 16-19. Basili Epist. 308, tom. iii. p. 300.

⁴ Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 1310.

council of Gangra, held some twelve or fifteen years later, show that the superstitions and idolatries of the church, were among the causes of those secessions. The bishops allege that they assembled and enacted their canons, in order to arrest secessions that were taking place from the house of God and from the church; and represent that by many the church and its services were disapproved, that separate assemblies were held, other discourses delivered, and different doctrines taught, new customs introduced in respect to dress, fasting, and celibacy, the basilicas of martyrs denounced, and their worshippers and worship reproached, and that all who rejected the authority of the church usurped the right of private judgment, and formed a system of their own. They therefore assembled to condemn and excommunicate all such; and by their fifth canon denounced an anathema on whoever should teach that the house of God and the assemblies in it were to be despised; by their sixth, on whoever should hold a religious assembly apart from the church, and celebrate religious services separately, without the presence of a presbyter according to the order of the bishop; and by their twentieth, on whoever should censure the assemblies in the temples of the martyrs, and the services celebrated in them in their commemoration.¹

The edicts of the emperors present similar indications that there were many who dissented from the Catholic church soon after its nationalization. Thus Gratian in 378: "In order that heretical assemblies might be discontinued, we on a former occasion," probably in 376, "ordained that the places, whether in the city or country, in which religious assemblies are held, and altars erected under a false pretence of religion, separately from the church with which we commune, should be confiscated; so that should they be allowed either through the connivance of the judges, or the audacity of the ungodly, it shall in either case be at their peril."²

The edicts of the like nature issued by Theodosius the Great, many of which are seen in the Theodosian code, are represented by Arcadius in a law of 396 as very numerous. "Let no one of the heretics, who have heretofore been embraced in the innumerable laws of our august sire, dare to gather a forbidden assembly, and contaminate the mysteries of the Almighty with a profane mind, neither in public nor in private, neither secretly nor openly. Let no one venture to appropriate to himself the

¹ Labbei Concil. tom ii. pp. 1098-1102.

² Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 4.

title of bishop or the ecclesiastical order, and use their holy names with polluted lips."¹

Who were denoted by the term heretics, was defined in another edict of the same year. "They are included under the term heretics, and ought to be subjected to the laws enacted against them, who are convicted of deviating from the doctrine and practice of the church for a light reason."²

Of the sixty-six laws of the fifth title of the sixteenth book, issued within one hundred and ten years of the council of Nicæa, a great portion are thus directed against dissentients from the Catholic church; prohibiting their assemblies, debarring them from the ordination of ministers, confiscating their houses of worship, exiling them from the cities, and threatening them with death; and present the most indubitable evidence that many in every part of the empire, who could not be branded with the opprobrious names of Manicheans, Montanists, Donatists, Eunonians, or even Novatians, withdrew from the establishment from disapprobation of its doctrines and rites, and worshipped apart.

But a public protest, that drew the attention of the clergy throughout the empire against the superstitions and idolatries with which the church had become debased, was made towards the close of the fourth century, by Vigilantius, a native of Lyons, in Gaul, and a presbyter at first at Barcelona, Spain, and subsequently in Italy, in the vicinity of the Cottian Alps. In his preaching, and in a volume, he assailed the celibacy of the clergy, monkery, excessive fasting, and pilgrimages to Jerusalem, as vices instead of virtues; rebuked the debasement of the worship of the church by the introduction of pagan rites, and denounced the veneration of relics and the invocation of saints as idolatrous. Jerome represents him as denying that the sepulchres of the martyrs should be venerated, condemning vigils at their graves, pronouncing celibacy a heresy and school of licentiousness, and charging the worshippers of the martyrs with idolatry, and quotes the following from the volume of Vigilantius as his proof. "What need is there, not only to honor with such respect, but even to adore, I know not what, which carrying in a little box you worship? Why do you in adoration kiss dust covered with a linen cloth? We see a rite, almost pagan, introduced into the

¹ Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 26.

² Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. v. l. 28. *Hæreticorum vocabulo continentur, et latis adversus eos sanctionibus debent subcumbere qui vel levi argumento a judicio Catholicæ religionis et tramite detecti fuerint deviare.*

church under the pretence of religion. While the sun still shines, a multitude of wax tapers are lighted, and wherever there is a little fine dust, I know not what, in a small vase covered with fine linen, they kiss in adoration. Men offer great homage of this kind to the blessed martyrs, and imagine that they are illustrated by cheap tapers, whom the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, irradiates with the full splendor of his majesty. Do the souls of the martyrs delight in their own ashes, and always hover over them, lest, if absent, they might be unable to hear when a sinner approaches to invoke their aid?"¹ And these sentiments, it is apparent from Jerome's representations, were neither peculiar to Vigilantius, nor had their origin with him, but were common to many in that part of Italy, and had long prevailed. He says it is reported that he had bishops as his coadjutors, if they could be called bishops, who would not ordain deacons unless they were already married; having no faith in the chastity of celibates, and ostentatiously showing how holily their clergy lived, whom the people universally would suspect of vice, and regard as unfit to administer the sacraments, if they were not seen to have wives and children.² That marriage was thus made a requisite to admission to the sacred office, indicates that the practice had long prevailed, and implies, therefore, that it was not originated by Vigilantius, who had then resided in that region but a short period. His reprobation of the homage of relics, and the invocation of saints, was, doubtless, likewise expressive of views long entertained by large numbers in that part of Italy, and in Gaul and Spain, rather than introduced by himself. It is known that the clergy of Spain and the south of Gaul disapproved of the homage of pictures and images in the beginning of the fourth century, from the canon of the council of Eliberis prohibiting their exhibition in churches, lest they should be made objects of adoration.³ And aversion to them is known to have continued, both in the south of France and the west of Italy, at the foot of the Alps, for several ages, from the removal of the images from the church of Marseilles, by Serenus, towards the close of the sixth century; from the denunciation of their worship by the clergy of the kingdom, after the second council of Nicæa in 787; and from their condemnation by Claude, of Turin, in the following age. These facts indicate that there was in that part of Europe a continued succession of teachers and worshippers, who publicly disapproved of those er-

¹ Hieronymi Epist. 59, 60, adv. Vigilant.

² Ibid. 60.

³ Labbei Concil. tom. ii. c. 36, p. 11.

rors and idolatries from the period of their introduction into the church through a long succession of ages.

IV. The rulers endeavored to tempt and compel all dissentients to submit to their usurped authority, and concur in the nationalized faith and worship.

Constantine adopted the church as an auxiliary to the state ; endeavored through the whole of his administration to bring all who assumed the Christian name to enter the establishment, under the persuasion that it would contribute to the strength and permanence of the government ; and enjoined that policy on his sons. Sozomen relates that when near the close of life, he advised Constantius to assemble a council for the purpose of reconciling the Arians and orthodox, under the conviction that the empire would have no prosperity unless God was worshipped in the same manner by all.¹ And it was, undoubtedly, from the adoption of that theory as politicians, and not from any religious motives, that Constantius and Valens especially, and probably, in a large degree, Gratian and Theodosius the Great, strove by edicts and penalties to force all who adopted the Christian name to conform to the nationalized church. It was with that view that Constantius summoned the councils of Rimini, Sirmium, Serdica, Seleucia, and others ; Theodosius that of Constantinople, and other emperors those that followed.² They accordingly, for a long series of ages, employed every species of influence in their power, to allure or drive the whole population into the Catholic communion. Constantine gave peculiar privileges to the churches of the establishment, restoring their edifices and other property, protecting them in their worship, contributing to their funds from the national treasury, and allowing them to receive bequests from the dying. He conferred important immunities and powers on the nationalized clergy, exempting them from the burthens of civil offices, releasing their property from taxation, and constituting them judges in the civil as well as ecclesiastical causes in which they were interested, incorporating their canons with the civil laws of the empire, and causing them to be enforced by the magistrates and soldiers ; while, on the other hand, he discouraged and obstructed all dissentients, by debarring them from the immunities granted to the Catholics, confiscating their churches, prohibiting their assemblies, and driving the intractable into exile. Those laws were continued by Constantius and Valens, and enforced on a vast scale throughout the

¹ Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 19. Eusebii Hist. Eccl. lib. x. c. 5, p. 320.

² Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 37. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. vii. c. 12.

empire ; many of the orthodox bishops were deposed and banished ; the inferior clergy driven in crowds from their churches, and great numbers of both sexes, who refused to conform to the Arian faith, put to the torture.¹

That policy was continued by Gratian, Theodosius, Arcadius, and Honorius, in favor of the orthodox. By an edict issued in 380, the toleration which had before been granted to pagans was withdrawn, and the whole population of the empire required to embrace the Catholic faith. "We will that all people who live under our sway, practise the religion which was communicated by the holy apostle Peter to the Romans, which it is known is followed by the pontiff Damasus, and Peter, the bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolic sanctity ; 'that we should believe according to the apostolic rule and evangelical doctrine, in the one deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of equal majesty, and in a holy Trinity.' Following this law we command all to embrace the name of Catholic Christians, but condemn all others as delirious, to bear the infamy of an heretical doctrine ; their assemblies are not to be denominated churches, and they are to be punished, first by the divine vengeance, and then by inflictions by us, which we undertake at God's command."²

They ordered all the churches to be delivered to the bishops who held that doctrine. "We order all the churches to be immediately delivered to the bishops who confess the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of one majesty and power, of the same excellence and glory, making not a dissonance by a sacrilegious division, but a trinity in order, an assertion of persons, and a oneness of deity. Who they are, will be determined by their communion with the bishops of Constantinople, Alexandria, Laodicea, Tarsus, Iconium, Antioch, Cæsarea, Mitilene, Nyssa, Scythia, and Marcionopolis. They must be permitted to obtain the Catholic churches who are of the communion and fellowship of approved priests. But all who dissent from their faith who are here enumerated, are to be expelled from the churches as manifest heretics, nor is any power hereafter to be allowed them of obtaining the pontifical churches, that the priesthood of the Nicene faith may continue pure. Nor after the plain expressions of this edict shall any place be allowed to malignant craft."³

In other edicts they prohibited heretics from holding separate assemblies, confiscated their houses of worship, forbid their entertaining opinions differing from those of the Catholic church,

¹ Socratis Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 27. Sozomeni Hist. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 8.

² Codicis Theod. lib. xvi. tit. i. l. 2.

³ Ibid. l. 3.

denied them the liberty of ordaining ministers of their churches, debarred some classes from the right of inheriting and bequeathing property, banished them from the cities, excluded them from communion with the Catholics and the society of the reputable, and endeavored by rewards on the one hand, and on the other by disabilities, dishonors, obloquy, confiscation, exile, torture, and all the enginery of a despotic and cruel government, through a long tract of ages, to force the whole population to submit to their assumption of authority over religion, and unite in their idolatries. Every class of objectors was mercilessly crushed, and all liberty of worship and freedom of opinion extinguished.

V. As it was by spiritual aids that the true worshippers were enabled to resist the temptations and force by which the rulers endeavored to constrain them to apostasy, and to fly to the desert, no specific record of those aids is to be sought on the page of history. The only evidence that we can ask or possess, that they were conferred, is presented in the fact that a body of dissentients from the corrupt church were in a later age found in a secluded scene, who had survived the endeavors of the rulers of the fourth, fifth, sixth, and following centuries, to compel all their subjects to conformity, and who have continued to maintain a separate existence, and offer an unidolatrour worship to the present time.

And such a body were the Waldenses inhabiting the eastern valleys of the Cottian Alps. They are known from the testimony of cotemporary Catholics and their own authors to have existed there as early as the eleventh century. It was then, and is now, claimed by themselves, and admitted by their enemies, that they had subsisted there from a much earlier age. They were a Christian church, having the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, regarding them as a revelation from God, and making them the rule of their faith; having a ministry of their own, holding religious assemblies, professing and teaching the doctrines of the gospel, and celebrating the sacraments.

They were dissentients from the Catholic church, rejecting its usurping priesthood, its superstitious rites, its false doctrines, and its idolatrour worship.

They were distinguished for the simplicity and purity of their lives. It was asserted by them, and repeated by the Catholics, that they were induced to retreat to the secluded valleys which they inhabit, to escape the despotism of the rulers and the corruptions and tyranny of the church, soon after its nationalization by Constantine. They have continued to subsist there to the present time, as a separate and evangelical church.

They have been preserved there and nourished by extraordinary means. Of the dangers and necessities to which they were exposed, during the first five hundred years of their seclusion, we have little knowledge. Their preservation, however, through such a period, while the whole church without relapsed into idolatry, and the civil and ecclesiastical rulers were exhausting every art to drive dissentients from existence, is itself little less than a miracle. It could have been only by the peculiar care of providence, that they were not overwhelmed by their implacable foes. It was by the special gifts of the divine Spirit, that a succession of pious and faithful teachers and believers was continued through so many ages. But after they drew the attention of the persecuting civil and ecclesiastical rulers, the care of God was very conspicuous in their preservation. Great numbers were, from age to age, seized, imprisoned, and put to death as martyrs. They were repeatedly threatened with extermination by the sword, and reduced by slaughter, famine, and the sufferings incident to persecution and war, to a small body. They were obstructed by the intrusion of Catholics on their lands, and compelled to migrate to other countries. Both insidious and violent endeavors were made for several centuries, to draw them to apostasy. Their children were often stolen, and borne away to be educated in the Catholic faith. They were driven from their valleys in 1686, and scattered through Germany, Switzerland, and France, and kept in banishment several years. Yet against all these enemies, and through all these dangers, while all other nations and churches underwent the greatest vicissitudes and revolutions, they continued the same people and the same church, holding the same faith, offering the same worship, maintaining the same simplicity and purity of manners, and uttering the same testimony against the nationalized and apostate hierarchies. They were succored by the pious of France, Switzerland, and Germany, through a long tract of dark and stormy ages; at later periods the Protestant princes repeatedly interposed with their persecutors in their behalf, and the benevolent of Great Britain and other countries have often sent them liberal contributions to relieve their necessities, and aid them in educating their children, and supporting their pastors.

VI. The population at large, received the corrupt religion dictated by the emperors, with the utmost eagerness, and by their conspicuous and exulting acquiescence, which seemed to be universal, may naturally have rendered it easier for remote churches and obscure individuals who dissented, to escape the notice of

the rulers, and retire into unfrequented regions like the valleys of the Alps, where, shielded from observation, they might for ages maintain a pure worship without obstruction.

That the assumptions of authority by Constantine, and the false doctrines and idolatrous rites introduced under his patronage, were approved by the great body of the bishops and church, is indisputable from the universal exultation at his triumph over Maxentius and Licinius, and the legalization of Christianity. Not a single conspicuous prelate appears to have objected to that measure. They attended the synods which he assembled; they received their canons and decrees, and accommodated themselves in their organization under patriarchs, exarchs, and metropolitans, and in their discipline, to the civil government as remodelled by him, assumed the civil offices to which he appointed them, accepted the provisions he made for their support, and availed themselves of the civil magistrate to enforce their discipline. Not a murmur of dissent from his arrogations was publicly heard, till the power they had sanctioned him in assuming was turned against themselves; and though, as corruptions were introduced into the church during the fourth century, many became dissatisfied, withdrew, and formed separate assemblies, yet nearly the whole church eagerly embraced, and zealously sustained the national establishment in all its errors of doctrine and debasement of worship, as is clearly indicated by the canons of the councils and laws of the emperors against dissentients, and demonstrated by the representations of the ecclesiastical writers of the period. Thus Jerome treats Vigilantius and his coadjutors as singular in their disapprobation of the homage of relics and invocation of saints, and as thereby condemning the whole eastern and western church. "He regrets that the relics of the martyrs are covered with a precious veil, and not tied up in rags or hair cloth, or thrown to a dung-hill, that the drunken Vigilantius alone might adore them. Are we, therefore, guilty of sacrilege when we enter the basilicas of the apostles? Was the emperor Constantius sacrilegious, who transferred the sacred relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy to Constantinople, at which the demons roared, and those possessing Vigilantius confessed that they were conscious of their presence? Is the present emperor Arcadius to be called sacrilegious, who transferred the bones of the blessed Samuel, long after his death, from Judea to Thrace? Are all the bishops to be regarded not only as sacrilegious, but as besotted, who carry about light dust and loose ashes in silk and a golden vase? Are the people of all the churches fools, who hastened to meet

the sacred relics with as great joy as though they saw the prophet present and living, so that crowds swarmed along the whole way from Palestine to Chalcedon, and resounded the praises of Christ with one voice?"

"Did the bishop of Rome do wrong, who offered sacrifices over those dead men, Peter and Paul according to us—according to you, a little vile dust; and regarded their tombs as Christ's altars? And do the bishops not only of one city, but of the whole world err, who, despising the huckster Vigilantius, enter the basilicas of the dead, in which vile dust and ashes, I know not what, lie wrapped in fine linen, so polluted that they taint every thing, and are like the sepulchres of the Pharisees that were whitened without, while within they were defiled with ashes and all impurities?"¹

It is apparent from these representations, that the great body of the clergy and church, embraced the debasing superstitions and idolatries introduced and patronized by the emperors, with an eagerness and passion conformable to the representation that the earth opened a vast chasm and swallowed the flood cast from the mouth of the dragon.

VII. The existence in the valleys of the Alps, of a body of dissenters from the Catholic church, appears to have been unknown for several ages, to the persecuting civil and ecclesiastical rulers.

The earliest persecution to death in their vicinity, of dissenters holding their doctrines, of which the writers of the middle ages give us any notice, was at Orleans in France, in 1017, and they are represented by Glaber as then recently detected, although he admits that they had existed for a long period. Others were soon discovered in that part of Gaul, in Lombardy, and in Piedmont, and many ere the close of the century put to death. In the following age the Waldenses seem first to have attracted the notice of prelates and princes; Peter Waldo, who in 1160 began to teach their doctrines at Lyons, and spread them over the whole of Catholic Europe, being a Waldensian by birth as well as in faith; but it was not till the opening of the next century that they became the objects of an exterminating persecution. They are spoken of by all the writers of the period, as then recently discovered.

From these representations, and from their not having been assailed at an earlier period, there is reason to believe that from their extreme seclusion, from the wars with which Italy was oc-

¹ Hieronymi Epist. 59, 60, adv. Vigilant.

² Baronii Annal. anno 1017.

cupied, and from the incessant strifes with which the church itself was rent, they for a succession of ages escaped the notice both of the popes and the secular princes.

VIII. And finally, after the retreat of the woman into the desert, the usurping civil rulers, for a series of ages, persecuted such individuals as they found rejecting the errors of the nationalized church, and maintaining an evangelical faith and worship.

The edicts of the emperors against dissentients from the nationalized church, from Constantine to the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty years, were continued by their successors, and other laws enacted for the purpose of repressing secession, and forcing the alienated back into the Catholic communion; and on the public withdrawal of the Paulicians in Armenia, organization as a separate church, and formal testimony against the false doctrines and idolatrous rites of the Catholics, a merciless war on them was commenced, and continued at intervals in Armenia, Thrace, Bulgaria, Bohemia, and Germany, for more than five hundred years, during which great numbers were put to death. And on their migration in the beginning of the eleventh century, into Italy and Gaul, they, with the Albigenses and other rejectors of the Catholic system, were, at the instance of the bishops, assailed by the civil rulers, and persecuted in every part of Italy, in Gaul, in Spain, in the Netherlands, in Germany, in Bohemia, in Hungary, and in England, with few intermissions, through the ages that followed to the close of the eighteenth century. Not a single body of evangelical believers withdrew from the nationalized church, or rejected its false doctrines, professed a scriptural faith, offered a pure worship, and testified against the errors of the apostate communions, that was not assailed by the wild beast, and forced to seal their witness to the truth with their blood.

Mr. Brightman, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Elliott, and others, regard the dragon that cast water from its mouth, not as the seven-headed dragon, but as the apostate angel who fought with Michael. But that is to disregard the ascription to it of an action appropriate only to a monster animal like a dragon inhabiting water. That error led to a misapplication also of the other parts of the symbol. Thus Mr. Daubuz and Mr. Elliott exhibit the two wings that were given to the woman, as denoting the eastern and western empires. But as the dragon represents the rulers of the empire, the empire itself cannot be the wings by which she escaped from their presence. It is against analogy. There is no resemblance between two divisions of an empire which are immovable, and

wings which are the instruments of motion from one part of it to another. An empire sustains no such relation to a person residing in it, as wings would to one to whom they were so united as to constitute a part of himself. The fancy is preposterous in other relations also, as well as in contradiction to the symbol. If the two divisions of the empire were the wings, whither was the woman borne? Did the empires convey her out of their territories? How is the supposition that the empires were the wings, to be reconciled with the representation, that the earth opened its mouth, and drank the river cast forth by the dragon? Did the wings swallow the torrent, as well as bear the woman above it? Mr. Mede's exposition, who regarded the eagle as the empire, and the wings as emperors of the eastern and western divisions, is similarly objectionable.

Mr. Brightman, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Elliott, and others, exhibit the water which the dragon cast from its mouth, as the Gothic nations by which the western empire was devastated and conquered. But those nations were not cast from the mouth of the rulers of the empire. They entered the empire against the wishes, and with few exceptions, the strenuous exertions of both the emperors, and army, and the people. Their objects were plunder and conquest, not the seduction or compulsion of pure worshippers of God to apostasy. Their invasions were represented by the symbols of the first four trumpets, and exhibited as commissioned to devastate and overthrow the western Roman empire, not to force pure worshippers and faithful witnesses to conform to the idolatrous nationalized church.

Vitringa's exposition, who regarded the waters as symbolizing the Saracens, is open to similar objections. They were not cast from the mouth of the Roman rulers. They are represented by the locusts of the fifth trumpet, and as commissioned to chastise an apostate church, not to draw pure worshippers to apostasy.

Mr. Faber exhibits the water, as the European infidels of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But that is in contradiction to his assumption that the seven-headed dragon, that cast them from its mouth, is the symbol of all the unfaithful members of the visible church. It was not the apostate church, that cast on the world the vast host of infidels and atheists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As multitudes of those infidels were members of the visible church, the supposition that they were cast forth from it, implies that all infidels of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were excommunicated from the visible

church. But no such excommunication of infidels has taken place. It was during the flight of the woman, moreover, that the water was cast after her, not near the close of her residence of twelve hundred and sixty years in the desert.

SECTION XXXI.

CHAPTERS XII. 18, XIII. 1-10.

THE TEN-HORNED WILD BEAST.

AND I stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a wild beast ascending from the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten diadems, and on its heads names of blasphemy. And the wild beast which I saw was like a panther, and its feet as of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave it its power, and its throne, and great authority. And I saw one of its heads was, as it were, wounded to death; and its death-wound was healed. And the whole earth wondered after the wild beast. And they worshipped the dragon because it gave authority to the wild beast. And they worshipped the wild beast, saying, Who is like to the wild beast? and, Who is able to war with it? And a mouth was given to it speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given to it to do [it] forty-two months. And it opened its mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. And it was given to it to make war with the saints, and to vanquish them. And authority was given to it over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation. And all will worship it who dwell on the earth, whose name is not written in the book of life of the Lamb, who was slain from the foundation of the world. If any one has an ear, let him hear. If any one leads into captivity, into captivity he goes. If any one slays with the sword, by the sword he must be slain. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

This wild beast is a symbol of rulers, manifestly, from the badges of royalty ascribed to it, crowns, a throne, and great authority; and a symbol of a body of cotemporaneous rulers, obviously, from its ten horns with their diadems, which are representative of separate dynasties; and from its authority over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation on the earth, which had been subject to the throne surrendered to it by the dragon. It is the representative of a combination of dynasties, that succeed to

a dominion formerly exercised by the dragon, as is seen from its receiving from it its power, and its throne, and great authority. That is indicated also by the seven heads, which are representatives of the same species of supreme rulers that are symbolized by the heads of the dragon. The disappearance of the diadems from the heads, and elevation to the horns, denote that those orders of supreme rulers which the heads represented, are no longer in authority, but are succeeded by the new dynasties denoted by the horns. Its body was like a panther's, its feet like a bear's, and its mouth like a lion's; a union of the utmost agility with the greatest strength to grasp and appetite to devour, indicating a combination of aggressive, bloody, cruel, and insatiable tyrants.

That one of its heads was wounded to death with a sword, and its death-wound healed, denotes that one of the successions of rulers symbolized by its heads, was cut off by the sword and superseded by one of the others for a time, but subsequently restored. That the whole earth wondered after it, indicates that the whole population of the ten kingdoms regarded the monarchs whom it represents, with admiration and awe, and eulogized the heroism of their exploits, and the wisdom of their rule. That they worshipped the dragon because it gave it authority, implies that they regarded important rights which their monarchs exercised as derived from the dragon, and as legitimately assumed by them, because they had been arrogated and exercised by that ancient rule. That their ascriptions to the dragon and the wild beast of that authority as legitimate was a worship, denotes that the assumption of that authority was an arrogation of the prerogatives of God, and their assent to it, therefore, the ascription to them of a homage that is due only to him. That arrogation of his rights is denoted also by the names of blasphemy on the heads of the dragon, and by the detraction of his name, which the wild beast is represented as uttering. His name is descriptive of what he is in his relations to his creatures, and is the symbol thence of his peculiar attributes and prerogatives, as is seen in the annunciation of Christ in the first vision, his proclamation of his attributes, and their celebration by the living creatures and elders, as the ground of his right to reign. The wild beast's blasphemy of his name, therefore, is its denial to him of his peculiar prerogatives, and arrogation of them as its own.

The tabernacle was the tent or edifice erected by the command of God, as the place of offering the worship which he enjoined; the inner sanctuary symbolizing the heaven in which he manifests himself, and receives the homage of the spirits of the just

made perfect and the angelic hosts ; the main sanctuary in which worship was offered by the priests and Levites, symbolizing the places in which the ministers of the Christian church offer acceptable worship. To calumniate his tabernacle, therefore, was to ascribe to it something inconsistent with its office, and detracting from his prerogatives, such as the representation of the heavens as the residence of other beings besides him, who are entitled to worship, and the exhibition of edifices in which idols are placed, and an homage paid to other beings and objects besides God, as the proper places of the worship which the church on earth is to offer him. To blaspheme those who dwell in heaven, was, in like manner, to calumniate them by representing them as arrogating the attributes and prerogatives of God, by desiring and receiving a religious homage that is due only to him. That it was given to it to make war with the saints and to vanquish them, denotes that it persecuted the pure worshippers who refused submission to its sacrilegious usurpations, and inflicted on them what evils it pleased. That it had authority over every tribe, and people, and tongue, and nation, and was worshipped by all except the true people of God, signifies that all the nations over which the monarchies which it represents reigned, submitted to their arrogations of the rights of God, and that none dissented, and acknowledged, and vindicated the prerogatives of the Almighty, but those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life.

That he that led into captivity was himself to become a captive, and he that slew with the sword must himself be slain, indicates that those who should attempt to defend themselves by force from the religious tyranny of those usurping monarchies, would be defeated in their endeavors, and involve themselves in the very evils they attempted to escape. That here is the faith and the patience of the saints, denotes that the true witnesses of God were not, in fulfilling their office, to resort to violence for deliverance from those persecuting tyrants, and the maintenance or acquisition of religious freedom, but in meekness and faith content themselves with uttering their testimony for God, which he has promised to make a devouring fire to their enemies.

The period of the wild beast's triumphant authority, like that of the woman in the desert, and the witnesses, was to be forty-two months, the symbol of twelve hundred and sixty years.

All these characteristics meet most conspicuously in the Gothic rulers, who established governments in the western Roman em-

pire during the fifth century, and their successors and subjects to the present time.

The emergence of the wild beast from the sea is not to be regarded as having been accomplished in a moment, or a brief space, but as having occupied such a period as would naturally be required for the invasion of the empire by many separate tribes migrating from vast distances, engaging in numerous wars, and finally, after victory, establishing new and independent governments. Nor are the chiefs who ruled them after the conquest of parts of the empire, to be considered as having assumed that relation in which they are symbolized by the horns, while they remained, as in France for a long period, in subordination to Rome. They emerged from the sea as dynasties, when, by concession or victory, they became rulers of portions of the empire in independence of that power. The institution of the horns, therefore, took place at different periods, and they were those that subsisted when the conquest of the empire was completed, and the imperial power extinguished.

I. On the conquest of Italy and termination of the imperial rule by the deposition of Augustulus in 476, the barbarians held possession of the whole western empire, with the exception of a part of Britain and Gaul, and were distributed under ten kingly governments.

1. The Vandals who entered Gaul in 406, soon passed into Spain, and after occupying a part of that province for near twenty years, in 427 invaded Africa, wrested it from the Romans, instituted an independent kingdom, and ruled it until the year 533.¹

2. The Suevi, who at the same period passed through Gaul, conquered Galicia in Spain, and maintained a kingdom till 585, a space of one hundred and seventy-seven years.²

3. The Visigoths in 408 passed from Italy into the south of France, and maintained a kingdom there till the year 506, when being driven by the Franks into Spain, they wrested a part of it from the Suevi, and in 585 extended their sway over the whole peninsula.³

4. Of the Alans who entered Gaul in 407, a part advanced into Spain, and after sustaining a separate government eight or nine years, were conquered by the Vandals and Suevi, and passed

¹ Procopii Hist. Vandal. lib. i. pp. 10-14, Edit. Grot. Jornandis de Reb. Get. c. 31, 33, pp. 655-657, Edit. Grot. Isidor. Chron. pp. 716, 732-737, Edit. Grot.

² Jornand. de Reb. Get. c. 44, p. 675. Isidor. pp. 716, 731, 737-740.

³ Isidor. Chron. pp. 716, 719, 731, 732.

with the former into Africa. Another body settled on the Rhine, and in 440 in Valencia. They repulsed Attila from Orleans, their capital, on his invasion of Gaul in 451, and were stationed in the centre of the army by which he was defeated at the battle of Chalons.¹ On his invasion of their territory in 453, they were supported by the Goths, and gained another victory.² In 464 they invaded Italy, and laid waste Liguria.³ Clovis extended his conquests over their territory, as far as the Liger in 485,⁴ but they continued to subsist as a separate people till 507, and perhaps a few years later, when they were conquered by the Franks.⁵

5. The Burgundians established themselves in Belgic Gaul in 407. After a few years they obtained possession of Savoy, and subsequently of Gaul on the Rhone, and maintained a separate kingdom till 524, when they were conquered by the Franks. On the division of the French kingdom, it again became a separate state, and continued such most of the time for several centuries.⁶

6. The Franks also entered Gaul in 407, and within a few years established a kingdom on the Rhine, which they continued to maintain and advance, until in the sixth century it extended over the whole territory embraced in modern France.⁷

7. Britain revolted from the Romans in the year 407 or 408, and was never recovered by them.⁸ The Saxons invaded the island in 449, and soon after established a kingdom which gradually extended over the whole of the territory which had been held by the Romans, and subsisted through several centuries.⁹

8. The Ostrogoths who were under the dominion of Attila, on the dissolution of his empire settled in Pannonia,¹⁰ and continued to hold their share of that province and a part of Illyria, till their invasion of Italy, and conquest of the Heruli in 493.¹

¹ Jornand. c. 31, p. 655. Isidor. Chron. pp. 716, 731, 733.

² Jornand. de Reb. Get. c. 31, p. 655, c. 37, p. 665, c. 43, p. 674. Isidor. pp. 731, 732, 737.

³ Sigonii Hist. de Occid. Imp. lib. xiv.

⁴ Ibid. lib. xv.

⁵ Gibbon's Hist. chap. xxxviii.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Agathie Hist. lib. i. p. 530-532, Edit. Grot.

⁸ Procopii Hist. Vandal. lib. i. pp. 8, 9.

⁹ Gibbon's Hist. chap. xxxviii. Lingard's Hist. Engl. vol. i. chap. ii. Sigonii de Occid. Imp. lib. xiii. anno 449.

¹⁰ Jornand. de Reb. Get. c. 38. p. 666, c. 50-55, pp. 685-694. Sigonii de Occid. Imp. lib. xiii. an. 455.

¹¹ Jornand. de Reb. Get. c. 52, p. 689. Sigonii de Occident. Imper. lib. xiii. anno 455, lib. xv. anno 493.

9. The Lombards, who were a branch of the Gepidæ, were also under the sway of Attila at the period of his invasion of Gaul and Italy; and on the dissolution of his empire in 455, assumed a portion of Pannonia,¹ which they continued to retain till the reign of Justinian, when they conquered the Gepidæ, whose seats were within the eastern empire, chiefly, and on the north of the Danube.² They subsequently extended their conquests towards the west to Bavaria.³ In 568 they invaded and conquered Italy, where they maintained their empire till near the close of the eighth century.⁴

10. The Héruli, who had also been under the sway of Attila, in 476 crossed the Danube into Noricum, and advancing into Italy, conquered the Romans, dethroned Augustulus, proclaimed Odoacer their leader king of Italy, and maintained their empire till conquered by the Ostrogoths in 493.⁵

These separate dynasties are with propriety united in a single symbol, and exhibited as one great combination of usurping tyrants, from the similarity of their arrogations, policy, and rulers. They were all feudatory monarchies. They all adopted, in a large degree, the laws of the ancient empire as their common law.⁶ They united in the same usurpation of the divine rights, in imposing the same false religion on their subjects, and in a similar hostility to the true people of God. They all nationalized the church, and all persecuted dissenters.

II. They were to their subjects in strength, ferocity, and blood

¹ Grotius, in his Prolegomena to the history of the Goths, quotes a passage from Paul Warnefrid's Miscellany, expressly asserting that the Gepidæ, of whom the Lombards were a branch, passed the Danube in the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius, and settled around Singidunum and Sirmium. Sed addendus est Pauli illius notissimis locis alius minus cognitius ex Miscella ejus historia. Namque ubi ad Theodosii filiorum pervenit tempora, sic ait, ipse ut dixi Longobardus. 'Eodem tempore erant Gothi et aliæ gentes multæ et maximæ trans Danubium habitantes: ex quibus rationabiliores quatuor sunt, Gothi scilicet, Huisigothi, Gepides, et Vandali, et nomen tantum, et nihil aliud mutantes... Isti sub Arcadio et Honorio Danubium transeuntes, locati sunt in terra Romanorum, et Gepides quidem ex quibus postea divisi sunt Longobardi et Avars, villas quæ sunt circa Singidunum et Sirmium habitavere.'—Proleg. ad Hist. Goth. p. 27. So also Procopius, Hist. Vand. lib. i. pp. 5, 6. Grotius represents them, on the death of Attila, as taking possession of that part of Pannonia which had before been occupied by the Hunns. Postremo Marciano imperante pulsus Hunnis, Gepidæ in Pannoniæ partes Hunnis quondam inessas, successere. Ab his Gepidis orti sunt illi Longobardi.—Proleg. p. 53.

² Procopii Hist. Vand. lib. i. pp. 5, 6. Post Gepidæ, circa Singidunum et Sirmium et ad utranque Danubii ripam agros adepti sunt, quos et nunc tenent. Also lib. iii. pp. 387-394, lib. iv. p. 488.

³ Pauli Warnefridi de Gest. Longobard. lib. i. c. 19, 20, 21, 22, pp. 757-761.

⁴ Sigonii de Reg. Ital. lib. i. an. 567-570.

⁵ Sigonii de Occid. Imp. lib. xiv. anno 476.

⁶ Gibbon's Hist. chap. xxxviii. and xxxix. Labbei Concil. tom. ix. p. 761.

iness, what an animal would be to its victim, that united in itself the agility of the panther, the strength of the bear, and the mercilessness and voracity of the lion.¹

III. One of the successions of the dragon rule denoted by its heads, was cut off for a period by the sword, the sceptre assumed by one of the order denoted by the head that preceded it, and at length the interrupted succession restored again. The head receiving the death-wound, was the last, representing Constantine and his successors professing Christianity, and making the Christian religion the religion of the state. The death-wound was the interruption of that succession by the slaughter of all the heirs to the throne who professed the Christian faith, and accession of Julian, an open and zealous pagan, who re-established polytheism, and endeavored to suppress Christianity. The recovery of the head from the wound, was the restoration of the Christian succession in Jovian. The prediction that the Christian succession was to receive a deadly wound by a sword, had a signal fulfilment, on the one hand, in the slaughter of the imperial family by Constantine himself and his son Constantius, and on the other, in their fall in battle and by conspiracy. Crispus, the eldest son of Constantine, Faustina, the mother of his other sons, and Licinius, the son of his sister Flavia, were put to death by Constantine himself.² His two brothers, Julius Constantius, and Dalmatius the censor, Optatus, the husband of one of his sisters, Julius Dalmatius Cæsar and Hannibalianus, sons of Dalmatius the censor, and five other cousins, were massacred by the order or concurrence of Constantius immediately on his accession.³ Of the sons of Constantine who survived him, Constantine the eldest was slain in the year 340 in a civil war with his brother Constans;⁴ Constans was assassinated in the year 350 by Magnentius;⁵ soon after Nepotianus, a cousin, who usurped the purple at Rome, was put to death;⁶ and in 354, Gallus the brother of Julian; when, on the death of Constantius in the year 361,⁷ Ju-

¹ Nemo hujus tantæ belluæ immanitatem potest pro merito describere; quæ in uno loco recubans, tamen per totum orbem dentibus ferreis sævit, et non tantum artus hominum dissipat, sed et ossa ipsa comminuit, et in cineres furit, nequis extet sepulturæ locus.—Lactantii Instit. lib. v. c. 11.

² Philostorgii Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 4. Zosimi Hist. lib. ii. c. 29. Eutropii Hist. lib. x. c. 6.

³ Juliani Epist. ad Athen. Zosimi Hist. lib. ii. c. 39, 40. Theodoriti Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 2. Socratis Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 25.

⁴ Philost. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 1.

⁵ Eutropii Hist. lib. x. c. 9. Gibbon's Hist. Decl. and Fall, chap. xviii.

⁶ Socratis Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 25. Sozomeni Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. c. 1.

⁷ Socratis Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. c. 34.

lian, the apostate, being the only surviving male of the family entitled to the sceptre, and having already been made Cæsar by Constantius, and declared Augustus by the army of the west, succeeded to the throne without obstruction.¹ It was thus by the sword that all those of the family were cut off who might naturally have continued the succession of Christian emperors, and the sceptre devolved, from the want of any other eligible candidate,² to Julian, who had relapsed to paganism, and immediately after his accession, publicly disavowed Christianity, re-established the worship of idols, and endeavored to render it again the popular and national religion.³ But his purpose was intercepted by his death in the year 363, after a reign of about eighteen months,⁴ and the death-wound of the seventh head healed by the elevation to the throne of Jovian a Christian, and the continuance thereafter of a line of Christian emperors till the supreme power passed from the Romans to the Goths in the west, and to the Turks at Constantinople.

IV. The population of the empire regarded their rulers with awe and admiration. The serfs and common people sunk for ages to the most degraded vassalage, revered the monarchs, the various ranks of nobles, and their armed followers, as a superior race, while poets and historians celebrated their warlike exploits, and philosophers and priests justified their usurpations, and eulogized the wisdom and benignity of their rule.

V. The population of the Gothic kingdoms regarded their monarchs as having derived important rights from the rulers of the ancient empire, symbolized by the heads of the dragon, and as authorized by their example to arrogate whatever powers had been assumed by them, either in relation to their subjects, or in respect to God.

They regarded their kings as having acquired with the territory, which they wrenched from the Romans, the right of exercising over it a similar dominion, and acquiesced in their assumption of the prerogatives which had been arrogated by the emperors. Thus they approved of the adoption by them of the laws of the empire in respect to ecclesiastical affairs, and justified their usurpation of authority over the church and persecution of dissentients, by the example of the emperors. The church had from

¹ Socratis Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 1.

² Procopius, a relative of Julian, who aspired to the throne during the reign of Valentinian and Valens, and was put to death by the latter, was a pagan.—Philostorgii Eccl. Hist. lib. ix. c. 5, 6. Gibbon's Hist. chap. xxv.

³ Socratis Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. c. 1.

⁴ Ammiani Marcellini Hist. lib. xxv. c. 3. Socratis lib. iii. c. 21.

the period of its nationalization used the imperial edicts in its judicial decisions. The bishops of Gaul followed the Theodosian code;¹ and Burchard, Ivo, and Gratian introduced into their collections of the canons, many enactments and decisions from the code, *Novellæ*, and digests, and formally united the civil and ecclesiastical law. The principal laws of the Theodosian code that relate to the church, are those that gave it a civil establishment, provided for its revenues, enforced conformity to its faith and worship, invested the bishops with an ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction, and enjoined the execution of their decrees by the civil magistrates.

The endeavors of the Christian emperors to support and give efficiency to the Catholic church by this legislation, were alleged by the ecclesiastics and civilians of the modern kingdoms, as proofs that their princes had authority, and were under obligation to support their nationalized churches by a similar legislation. Thus Gregory the Great, in a letter to Ethelbert of England: "The Almighty exalts the good to the government of the nations, that he may through them communicate the blessings of Christianity to their subjects, which we learn has taken place in England, over which you were intrusted with authority, that you might impart the gospel to those under your sway. Guard, therefore, with care, illustrious son, the gift which you have received. Hasten to spread the Christian faith among your people. Increase your zeal for their conversion, oppose the worship of idols, overturn the fanes. Raise the manners of your subjects to purity, by exhorting, terrifying, alluring, chastening, and exhibiting a good example, that you may find him a rewarder in heaven, whose name and word you diffuse on the earth; for he whose honor you seek and maintain among the nations, will render your name, already distinguished, still more glorious with posterity; for thus formerly the emperor Constantine, so illustrious for piety, recalled the Roman empire from the homage of idols, converted it to the Redeemer, and by that means acquired far higher praise than the ancient princes, and surpassed his predecessors in fame as much as in achievements."²

Bellarmino alleges their example to show that princes have the right to legislate over religion, and compel their subjects to con-

¹ *Utebatur quidem olim ecclesia imperatoris legibus ad judicia ordinanda, et Galliarum episcopi codicem Theodosianum sequebantur.*—Petri de Marca de Concord. Sacerd. et Imp. tom. ii. lib. iii. c. vi. p. 46. Capit. Caroli. Mag. lib. vi. c. 366, pp. 985, 986. Van Espen. Jus. Eccl. pr. i. tit. xiii. c. 3.

² Gregorii Epist. 66, lib. xi. Ind. iv. p. 1164.

form to the nationalized church. "It is proved by the testimony of the pontiffs. Leo the Great, addressing Leo the emperor, said, 'I use the freedom of the Catholic faith with the most Christian prince, who is to be numbered with honor among the preachers of Christ, and exhort you to the fellowship of the apostles and prophets; that you would resolutely condemn and repel those who disown the Christian name, and not suffer those impious parricides to treat of the faith, who, it is apparent, wish only to subvert it. For as God has conferred on your clemency such illumination, you ought immediately to exert the regal power which is intrusted to you, not merely for the government of the world, but chiefly for the protection of the church, that by repressing those nefarious endeavors, you may maintain what is established, and restore what is disturbed to order.' The pious emperors held the same opinion, for Theodosius the Great, plucked up by the roots that liberty of believing which some princes had permitted, and commanded all to adopt the faith which the Roman pontiff taught was obligatory. Ambrose commended the younger Valentinian that he resolutely resisted Rome, asking the liberty she had formerly enjoyed of sacrificing to the gods. Marcan in like manner, not only severely prohibited all public disputation respecting the decrees of the councils, but forbid the private examination of them by individuals."¹

He alleged the example not only of the Christian, but even of the pagan emperors, as justifying the princes of the modern kingdoms in persecuting heretics. "Respecting the punishment which, after sentence by the church, civil princes can and ought to inflict on heretics, we shall begin with their books, and show that they may of right interdict and burn them; and it may be proved from the ancient and perpetual custom, not only of Christians, but of pagans." And he quotes the narrative in Valerius Maximus, of the burning by order of the Roman senate, of certain books that were unfriendly to religion; and the relation by Cicero of the banishment of Protagoras by the Athenians for the same reason, and destruction of his books. "The Nicene council adjudged the books of Arius to the flames, and Constantine ordered the execution of the sentence, and threatened death to whoever should be found clandestinely reading his works." "When the heresy of Nestorius was condemned by the council of Ephesus, his books also were interdicted, and ordered by the emperor Theodosius to be burned."²

"We will show that incorrigible heretics, and especially the

¹ Bellarmini de Laicis, lib. iii. c. 18.

² Ibid. c. 20.

relapsed, may and ought to be excommunicated by the church and punished by the secular powers, both with temporal penalties, and with death." "It is proved by the decrees and laws of the emperors, which the church has always approved. Constantine the Great, at the request of the synod of Nicæa, sent Arius and his associates into exile. He inflicted punishments on the Donatists also, and many excellent emperors enacted the severest laws against heretics. Afterwards Theodosius, Valentinian, Marcian, and others distinguished for their piety, issued edicts against them, by which they subjected them sometimes to fines, sometimes to the confiscation of their goods, sometimes to scourging and exile, and sometimes to death."¹

Bossuet says, "Whoever carefully examines the laws of the Theodosian and Justinian codes against heretics, will see that they are the source of the decrees against them which the church, aided by the edicts of princes, enacted in the third and fourth Lateran councils; for it is apparent at once, why they are regarded as infamous, why they are held to be incapable of inheriting and bequeathing property, why they are deprived of their possessions; and although those penalties were especially directed against Manicheans and Donatists, they were not improperly extended to other heretics, especially the Albigenses, whom the learned know were a branch of the Manicheans, and who were deservedly coerced by the same punishments, because they had imitated the infuriate Donatists in devastating the provinces. It is not strange that they who by the laws had forfeited their lives, should be confined in prison, reduced to slavery, and assailed with war. To the laws of the ancient emperors, subsequent princes added such as were suited to the exigencies of the times, and permitted many things to the ecclesiastics against heretics, in order that the reverence due to the clergy might be more fully enforced against the contemptuous."²

The same views were maintained by Petrus de Marca, and the examples of the emperors quoted to sustain them: "Although to dictate laws in regard to ecclesiastical and spiritual things, does not fall within the limits of the royal prerogative, yet princes are bound to sustain canonical decrees by their laws." "If we admit this in respect to pagan princes, how much more must we hold that the duty of defending and advancing religion is expressly devolved on Christian monarchs, who are imbued with the true faith, and advanced by the aids of grace to extraordinary knowl-

¹ Bellarmini de Laicis lib. iii. c. 21, pp. 548, 549.

² Bossuetii Defens. Declar. Cleri. Gall. pr. i. lib. iv. c. 3.

edge."¹ And he alleges the examples of Theodosius, Marcian, and others, to prove the right and duty of princes to sustain the church ; and their example has been appealed to as authority for the usurpations and tyranny of the rulers of the modern kingdoms, by the great body of the writers who have treated of the subject, from the days of Gregory the Great to the present time.

VI. The ancient Roman rulers and the Gothic monarchs, were accordingly guilty of blasphemy against God, in their usurpations of authority over his rights and laws. Their arrogations implied that his rights as a lawgiver, were subordinate to theirs ; that it was in their power to rescind his legislation, and exempt their subjects from responsibility to him ; and thence that his whole government, which professes to be founded on rights that are peculiar to him, not on their will, is a usurpation. How clearly their assumptions were fraught with that claim of superiority to God, denial of his prerogatives, and accusation of his rule, is apparent from their actually asserting a dominion over his laws and his people in their peculiar relations to him, through the legislation of fifteen hundred years ; rescinding his commands and institutions ; introducing a different code ; instituting new religious rites ; constituting creatures, images, and relics, objects of worship ; appointing new mediators, and methods of sanctification and pardon ; and treating those who refused submission to their will, and paid a religious homage to God only, as apostates ; pursuing them with fire and sword, and hunting them from existence as the most atrocious malefactors. No actions can be imagined which could embody a more formal and emphatic assumption of authority over his laws, and ascription to him, therefore, of infinite usurpation in the institution and exercise of his government.

VII. The rulers symbolized by the wild beast, traduced the tabernacle of God. They caluminated the heavens, the place in which he visibly manifests himself, and receives the homage of the spirits of the just made perfect and the angelic hosts, by exhibiting them as the residence of innumerable other beings that are entitled to divine worship.

They regarded the saints and angels whom they invoked, as residing in the divine presence,² and in sanctioning their invocation, deified them by the ascription to them of the attributes and prerogatives of God, and thereby traduced the heavens, by representing them as the abode not merely of the Self-existent, Eter-

¹ Petri de Marca Concord. Sacerd. et. Imp. lib. ii. c. 10, tom. i. pp. 244-248.

² Benedicti xii. Bull. iii. ap. Bullar. Mag. tom. i. p. 217.

nal, and Almighty, who alone is God and has a right to the homage of his creatures, but of countless other deities also of similar prerogatives and title to worship.

That homage of creatures was countenanced by Constantine and his sons; was specifically sanctioned by Theodosius and his immediate successors, by ratifying the faith of the bishop of Rome and enforcing it on all their subjects; and was formally legalized by Constantine V. and Irene by confirming the decrees of the second council of Nicæa approving the invocation of saints as well as the homage of images, and by their successors through all the ages that followed to the fall of the eastern empire.

It was still more expressly sanctioned by the kings of the modern empire. Their invocation, according to Bellarmine, is denoted by the litanies which were appointed by the first council of Orleans, the fifth and sixth of Toledo, and several others, to be recited annually for three days anterior to the anniversary of Christ's birth or ascension. Those councils were called, and their canons ratified, by the Spanish and Frank princes.¹

But they sanctioned their worship not only by legalizing the Catholic church which was addicted to their homage, and by their example, but by soliciting the canonization by the pope of saints who had lived in their dominions. Thus it was at the instance of Henry of England, that King Edward was canonized in 1163 and Thomas a Becket in 1173.² It was at the desire of the king and nobles that Richard, bishop of Chester, was canonized in 1261;³ and of Philip of France, that St. Ivo was canonized in 1346. "We make known to your regal excellence in respect to the canonization of the pure confessor of Christ, Ivo, formerly a presbyter, for which your sublimity has earnestly solicited us, that after the long and careful examination which the arduousness of the question demands, we have, with the concurrence of our brethren, canonized him to the glory of God, and the consolation of the faithful, especially of your kingdom, which is known to have been the place of his birth, and ordered that he should be inscribed in the catalogue of the saints, and hereafter venerated as a saint by the church."⁴

It was at the request of Alphonsus, King of Spain, that St. Bernard was canonized in 1450;⁵ and at the solicitation of Frederick, emperor of Germany, that St. Catherine was canonized in 1461.⁶ The emperor of Germany, kings of France, Hungary,

¹ Bellarmini De Sanct. Beat. lib. i. c. 19.

² Bullar. Mag. tom. i. pp. 40, 41.

⁴ Ibid. tom. i. p. 257.

⁵ Ibid. tom. i. pp. 359, 360.

³ Ibid. tom. i. p. 125.

⁶ Ibid. tom. i. p. 371.

Sicily, several of the princes of Italy, and many others united in urging the canonization of Bonaventura in 1482. "Our sons beloved in Christ, Frederick, emperor of the Romans, Louis, king of France, Ferdinand of Sicily, Matthias of Hungary; our dear and noble sons also Alphonsus, Duke of Calabria, and John of Venice, John of Milan, and John Burbon, illustrious dukes; moreover the cities Florence, Sens, Lyons, Perugia, and Balneoregium, have solicited his canonization by us, with such zeal and perseverance, that we should regard it as severe and impious to resist them in a request so pious, and to which they seem to have been prompted by God."¹ Of the impious forms and expressions often employed in the act of canonization, the following are examples: "We therefore, following the suggestion and will of God, and considering that it is just and fit that we should praise and glorify those on earth with a religious homage, whom God honors in heaven, inasmuch as it is he rather who is praised and glorified in them, we decreed that the day of his canonization should be celebrated in the basilica of the prince of the apostles, where a vast multitude of every order assembled, and all the other rites having been legitimately performed, the procurator of the order of minors, standing up, pronounced the words of the Apostle John, There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and proved by the documents which had been recited, that the persons of the Trinity had testified that the blessed Bonaventura was in heaven; the Father by the power of his miracles, the Son by the wisdom of his doctrine, the Holy Spirit by the excellence of his life; and that it is required therefore imperatively, not only by those who have entreated this canonization, but by the indivisible Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that we vouchsafe to pronounce the blessed Bonaventura a saint. Trusting then that God would not permit us to err in this canonization, and having fulfilled and caused all things most accurately to be observed, that are in any manner requisite to it, with the mature counsel and unanimous consent of our brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, and all the prelates of the Roman court, relying on the authority of Almighty God and his blessed apostles Peter and Paul, we decree that Bonaventura of happy memory, professor of Christianity and cardinal, ought to be confidently and firmly held to be a saint, and inscribed in the catalogue of the other saints of God, and we hereby solemnly enroll him in the

¹ Bullar. Mag. tom. i. p. 424.

company of the holy confessors, pontiffs, and doctors, whom the holy church of God worships."¹

They thus blasphemed the Almighty, not only by representing him as on a level with his creatures in prerogatives and titles to homage, but by exhibiting him as concurring in their deification of apostate men, and sanctioning princes, prelates, and people, in that audacious impiety. The bull of canonization then proceeds to promise indulgence to those who should visit the church in which his body was interred, to exhort the clergy and people to pray that God, propitiated by the intercessions of the saint, would protect the Catholic church from the assaults of pagans and heretics, and to denounce the vengeance of the Almighty on whoever should venture to contravene the decree.²

VIII. They traduced the appropriate places for the worship which the church on earth is required to offer him, by representing them to be only such structures as were consecrated by superstitious rites, made the temples of images, and devoted to the worship of saints, of angels, of relics, and of inanimate or imaginary existences.

They uttered this calumny not only by legalizing and supporting the Catholic church, which enjoined the consecration of sacred edifices by ridiculous and impious rites, and the deposit of relics and images, and by adopting the decrees of councils which enjoined it, but also by ratifying similar canons of their own synods. By the canon law, which was the law of each of their kingdoms, worship was not allowed to be offered, except in edifices consecrated to that use;³ and that was expressly sanctioned by Charlemagne;⁴ nor were edifices allowed to be consecrated except by the celebration of the mass.⁵ The seventh canon of the second council of Nicæa, required a deposit to be made of relics at the consecration of churches;⁶ and the fourth Lateran council, and the council of Trent, whose decrees were received by all Catholic princes, sanctioned the introduction and homage of pictures and images in the temples. The cathedrals, chapels, and oratories, accordingly, in which the kings and nobles offered worship, from the age of Gregory the Great to the Reformation, were desecrated by relics and images, and were the scene of an idolatrous worship; and such still are the edifices in which the Catholic princes offer their homage.

¹ Bullar. Mag. tom. i. p. 425.

² *Ibid.* tom. i. p. 425.

³ Gratiani Decret. de Consecrat. dist. i. c. i.

⁴ Capit. Reg. Franc. anno 769, c. 14. tom. i. p. 192.

Gratiani Dec. de Consecrat. dist. i. c. iii.

⁶ Labbei Concil. tom. xiii. p. 751.

IX. They caluminated those who dwell in heaven, by representing the spirits of the just and the angelic orders, as arrogating the rights of God, and seeking and receiving a homage from men, that is due only to him. In worshipping and legalizing the worship of those beings, they proceeded on the assumption that they acquiesced in it, as appropriate to their nature and station; and accused them therefore of usurping the throne and prerogatives of God, and demanding a homage as deities; which is to ascribe to them the greatest impiety of which creatures can be guilty.

X. The rulers symbolized by the wild beast, persecuted the true people of God, and inflicted on them the most wanton and atrocious cruelties.

In legalizing the Catholic church, and adopting the canons of the councils, and edicts of the Theodosian and Justinian codes against heretics, as laws of their kingdoms, they formally undertook to execute the decrees and judicial decisions of their synods and bishops against dissentients; and the popes and bishops were accustomed in every age, to devolve on them the infliction of their sentences to imprisonment, confiscation, exile, and death. Thus it was the civil powers that burned the martyrs at Orleans and other cities in the south of France in 1017. It was the kings of France and dukes of Savoy, that slaughtered the Albigenses in the twelfth and the Waldenses in the following centuries; the kings of England that persecuted the Wickliffites and Lollards; and of Hungary that made war on the Bohemians. It was the emperor of Germany that consigned Huss and Jerome to the flames; and the civil rulers that put to death the vast crowd of martyrs in England, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Germany, and Sicily, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

They assumed the right moreover, independently of the command of the church, to dictate the faith and worship of their subjects, passed laws prohibiting dissent from the nationalized religion, and punished those who refused submission to their tyranny, with forfeitures, exile, tortures, and death. Thus Louis of France: "Louis, by the grace of God king of the French, to all the citizens of Narbonne and other subjects residing in that diocese, health and favor. Wishing in the first years of our life and reign to serve him from whom we derive our kingdom and station, we desire in order to his honor, that the church in your province, which has long been agitated with innumerable trials, should under our sway be honored and happily ruled. Where-

fore with the concurrence of the great and wise we decree, that the churches and ecclesiastics in the aforesaid district, use the liberties and immunities which the Gallican church uses, and enjoy them fully according to the custom of that church; and inasmuch as heretics have for a long time disseminated their venom in your parts, defiling in many forms our mother church, we ordain in order to their extirpation, that heretics who deviate from the Catholic faith, by whatever name they are called, after they have been convicted of heresy by the bishop of the place, or other ecclesiastical person who has the power, shall be immediately punished with a becoming infliction. We ordain likewise and strictly enjoin, that no one presume in any manner to harbor or shield heretics, or in any other way favor or trust them. Should any one dare to violate the foregoing injunction, he shall neither be admissible as a witness, eligible to any honor, nor capable of making a will, nor inheriting property by succession. All his goods, moveable and immoveable, which shall be forfeited by his heresy itself, we decree shall never be restored either to him or his posterity. We likewise command the barons of the provinces and our magistrates and other subjects, to be solicitous now and hereafter and zealous to clear the country of heretics and heretical defilement; and enjoin that they diligently endeavor to detect them, and when they have found them, present them without delay to the aforementioned ecclesiastics; and that on their being publicly convicted of error and heresy, disregarding all prejudices, entreaties, bribes, fear, and favor, they do in respect to them what they ought. But as they who should exercise their diligence in the detection and seizure of heretics, are to be honored and stimulated by rewards, we ordain and command that our magistrates in whose districts heretics may be seized, pay to the captor for each heretic, after he has been convicted of heresy, two marks for the space of two years, and after two years, one. As peace-breakers are accustomed to waste the country and disturb the quiet of the church and ecclesiastics, we ordain that they be wholly driven off, and peace maintained in the land, and that all exert themselves to preserve it. Moreover, as the keys of the church are contemned in that region, we order that the excommunicated be avoided according to the canonical injunctions; and if any perversely continue under excommunication a year, that they then be compelled by civil force to return to union with the church, that at least external punishment may constrain those whom the fear of God does not recall from evil. We therefore enjoin our magistrates, after a year, to

seize all goods moveable and immovable of such excommunicated persons, and not to restore them in any manner until the aforesaid persons have made satisfaction to the church, and been absolved; nor then even unless at our special command. The tithes of which the church has long been defrauded by the malice of the people, we order to be restored. Let not the laics hereafter retain them, but allow the church to take them freely.

“We order these decrees to be inviolably observed, and that the barons, vassals, and good villagers, swear to observe them, and depute our magistrates to execute them; who, within a month of their appointment, shall swear in a public place, and on a public day, to observe them, and cause them to be observed by all in good faith; which should they not do, they may expect the forfeiture of all their goods, and corporal punishment. Know ye also, that such is our will that these statutes should be observed, that even when our brother shall have possession of that territory, he shall swear to observe them, and cause them to be observed by his subjects. That these enactments may continue established and unaltered, we have caused them to be confirmed by our seal. Done at Paris, in April, in the year of grace, 1228.”¹

In like manner Frederick II. of Germany. “Frederick, by the grace of God, emperor of the Romans, and king of Jerusalem and Sicily, to all his princes, venerable archbishops, and other prelates, dukes, marquises, counts, barons, and all in authority in his empire, grace. The task of government, and the imperial dignity with which we are intrusted by God, require that the material sword which we wield, in distinction from that of the priesthood, should be used against the enemies of the faith, and in the extermination of heretical pravity.

“We enact, therefore, that the heretical, to whatever class they are referred, and in whatever part of the empire they have been condemned by the church and assigned to the civil power, shall be punished with a due infliction.

“Should any of them, however, after they have been seized, choose, from fear of death, to return to the unity of the faith, they shall be consigned to perpetual imprisonment, in order to the performance of penance according to the penal canons.

“Moreover, when heretics shall be found in cities, towns, or other places in the empire, by inquisitors commissioned by the apostolic seat, and other zealots of the orthodox faith, they who have jurisdiction there are required, at the suggestion of inquisitors and other Catholics, to seize and guard them strictly until,

¹ Petri de Marca. Concord. S. and Imp. lib. iii. c. i. tom. ii. pp. 13, 14.

being condemned by an ecclesiastical sentence, they who reproached the sacraments of faith and life can be consigned to a reproachful death. We ordain that the advocates and unlawful defenders, whom the artful enemy raises up or prepares to favor the error of heretics, shall be subjected to the same punishment, inasmuch as it reduces those whom it pollutes to the same level, unless on being admonished they consult their safety and desist.

“Those, moreover, who, being convicted of heresy in one place, remove to other places, that they may more warily multiply converts, we condemn to due punishment.

“We decree also that those heretics who, having been brought to judgment, and from the peril of life abjured their heresy, shall afterwards be found to have sworn falsely and relapsed to their former error, shall be subjected to death, that their falsehood may meet a proper retribution.

“We withhold, moreover, from heretics and their harborers and favorers, all benefit of objection and appeal, desiring that the germs of heresy should be wholly extirpated from the empire, in which the true faith should always exist.

“Moreover, as we are angry at those who condemn our name, and condemn those who are guilty of treason, both in their own persons and by disinheritance in their offspring, much more violently and justly are we provoked at the blasphemers of God’s name and detractors of the Catholic faith, and by our imperial authority deprive the heirs and offspring of such heretics, their harborers, favorers, and advocates, to the second generation, of all temporal advancements, public offices, and honors, that they may waste away in continual grief because of the crimes of their ancestors, and know experimentally that God is jealous, and avenges the sins of parents on their offspring. We do not, however, mean that they are to be wholly debarred from compassion. They who do not adopt the heresy of their fathers, but inform against them, are not to be involved in the penalties with which their parents’ guilt is punished.

“Furthermore, we direct it to be made known to the brethren of the order of preachers, who are sent into the empire for the care of the faith against heretics, and others whom they may summon to judge heretics, unless they be persons who have been outlawed, that we wish them to be received in going, tarrying, and returning, as under our imperial protection, and by the approval and aid of the faithful of the empire, kept unharmed; and command all of you among whom they may come, to receive them kindly, and employ all your wisdom, authority, and power,

in the work so acceptable to God, of preserving them harmless from the assaults of the heretics who plot against them.

“Heretics also, and those who inform against them, in your jurisdiction, are to be seized and retained in custody until the accused can be ecclesiastically condemned and subjected to the punishment which they merit.

“Know that in the performance of this business you will render an obedience most grateful to God, and acceptable to us, if you exert yourselves, together with those brethren, effectually in expelling from the empire this new infamy of heresy; and that if any one shall hereafter be remiss and unserviceable, he must, deservedly, appear culpable both before God and in our sight. Dated, Padua, February 22d, 1243.”¹

Similar statutes were enacted by the princes of the other kingdoms.

XI. The prediction that he who led into captivity should himself become a captive, and he that slew with the sword be himself slain, had a signal fulfilment in the slaughter and vassalage of all those who attempted to deliver themselves by force from the religious tyranny of the European monarchs.

The Albigenses were nearly exterminated by the cruel armies against which they attempted to defend themselves, and the small number that remained after the devastation of their fields, the conflagration of their cities, and the promiscuous slaughters to which they were subjected, were either forced to conform to the Catholic church, or driven into other lands. The Waldenses perished in far greater numbers by the sword, in their struggles for preservation and freedom, than by the fires of martyrdom; and sunk, after their contests, to a still more hopeless vassalage to their persecutors. The resort to the sword by the Bohemians and the Huguenots of France, to defend their religious freedom, resulted, after vast slaughters, in their defeat and helpless subjection to the tyranny from which they endeavored to extricate themselves. And the Protestants of Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Great Britain, who succeeded in delivering themselves from the dominion of their ancient tyrants, instead of securing thereby their religious liberty, only placed themselves, by the nationalization of their churches, under the tyranny of Protestant rulers in place of Catholics.

XII. The witnesses of God exhibited their patience and faith by meekly enduring the cruelties inflicted on them by their per-

¹ Bullar. Mag. tom. i. p. 83.

secutors, and contenting themselves with the utterance of their testimony for him.

No characteristics of any body of persons were ever more indubitable, conspicuous, and universal, than were the patience, meekness, fidelity, and constancy of those who were martyred by the rulers of the European kingdoms for their profession of the faith of Christ, and rejection of the false doctrines and idolatrous worship of the Catholic church. Of the many thousands and hundreds of thousands who were called through twelve centuries to maintain their allegiance to God at the peril of their lives, and assailed with every treacherous art, lacerated by the most cruel tortures, subjected to indignities from which delicacy revolts, and at length delivered to the flames, the number who yielded, or faltered, was comparatively small; and of those who, under the insupportable agonies and distraction of the scourge and the rack, recanted, or promised a recantation, a large proportion, immediately on being released from the sufferings which had overcome them, abjured their retractions, reprofessed with redoubled energy the faith of Christ, and met without faltering the hideous death to which they were immediately hurried. Such is their uniform history in whatever age they fell, or to whatever nation or rank they belonged. In multitudes of instances the young, the delicate, the beautiful, the cultured, who had been nurtured in tenderness and refinement, submitted to be torn from the bosoms of their parents and friends, endured the most repulsive and shameful tortures, and welcomed the gibbet, the axe, and the flames, with a sublimity of calmness, fortitude, and trust in God, and benignity to their murderers, worthy of the disciples of Jesus, and presenting a resistless demonstration that they were animated by his Spirit, and sustained by his power.

Such were acknowledged by Bernard and others of that age, to be the characteristics of the Albigenses. Such, it was admitted by the Catholic historians, was the character of the Waldenses, the Wicklifites, the Lollards, and the Bohemians.

It was most conspicuously a trait of the martyrs of England, not only under Henry VIII. and Mary, but in an equal degree of the long succession of Puritans, who were imprisoned, mutilated, tortured, and put to death, by Elizabeth and the Stuarts. And it was illustriously the character of the vast crowd of the faithful, who were stretched on the wheel and consigned to the flames during the long reign of the Inquisition in Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Prussia,

Denmark, Poland, Sweden, and Hungary. The dreadful engines of torture erected by that bloody tribunal, are themselves, indeed, a stupendous proof of the inflexible fidelity and constancy of their victims ; for they were contrived and employed to wrench from them, by agonies immeasurably more dreadful than death, concessions and retractions which could not be induced by arguments or persuasions, nor extorted by threats. Acknowledgments from the whole succession of persecutors could not have testified with so emphatic a voice the unconquerable fidelity of the witnesses for God, as it is proclaimed by the erection and use of those infernal instruments to force them to apostasy.

XIII. The triumphant career of the wild beast as a blasphemer has continued through nearly twelve hundred and sixty years.

Its agency as a religious tyrant is not to be regarded as having commenced at its emergence from the sea, but at its full assumption of authority over religion, nationalization of the Catholic church, and concurrence with the pope in enforcing the false doctrines and superstitions of that apostate on its subjects, and persecuting the witnesses of Jesus for their dissent ; as it is in that relation that it has acted as a blasphemer of God, his tabernacle, and his saints. And on that it did not enter until a long period after its emergence from the sea. The first princes of each of the ten kingdoms, and their barbarian subjects, being either pagans or Arians, were hostile to the native Christians ; and for a century in Africa, for more than one hundred years in Italy, and for a considerable period in Spain, France, Germany, and England, were persecutors of the Catholics.

Baronius acknowledges that in the year 499 there was not a single Catholic prince within the limits of the church. " Before I lead you any farther, saddened by the mournful narrative, pause a moment and contemplate the state of the church at this time, in which not a single thorough Catholic Christian prince could be found in the whole circuit of the earth ; for, even the emperor Anastasius, who had lurked for some time under a veil of Catholicism, having now become openly known as a heretic and antagonist of the Catholic faith, richly deserved the excommunication with which he was struck by the Roman pontiff, although he raged still more violently on receiving the wound. Who, considering this, would not have been depressed with the expectation that the spark of orthodoxy was to be extinguished by so many winds, bursting with infuriate violence from the gates of hell!"¹

¹ Baronii Annal. anno 499, No. xiv.

In that year, however, Clovis, king of the Franks, with his nobles and people, embraced the Catholic faith, and nationalized the church by restoring to it the property which had been wrested from it, conferring on it large possessions, countenancing its false doctrines and impious rites, and at length fighting to propagate its faith. "The king himself, and the princes, on being baptized with the whole nation, gave a great number of estates, in the different provinces, to St. Remigius, which he distributed to the different churches."¹ "He not only restored to all the churches of his kingdom what had been taken from them, but also enriched a great number of them by his own bounty."² He alleged it as a reason of his war in 507, on the Goths of the south of France, that they were Arians. "It annoys me extremely that these Arians hold a part of Gaul: let us go, and with the help of God, conquer them, and subject their country to my dominion."³ About the middle of the sixth century, the princes of France began to summon the councils of the bishops, to legislate and sanction their legislation over the church, and to receive their concurrence in that assumption of authority. Childebert summoned the council of Orleans in 549, for the purpose of legalizing the ancient, and enacting new canons for the government of the church. "It is to be ascribed to the grace of God, when the will of princes concurs with the wishes of the bishops that a pontifical council should be held, and the ancient canons be constituted by re-adoption a rule of life, or new laws enacted in harmony with them, as place and time demand. Accordingly, the most clement prince, king Childebert, justly, because of his virtues, entitled invincible, has, out of regard to the holy faith and the state of religion, assembled the priests of the Lord in the city of Orleans, that he may hear from the lips of the fathers what is holy, and that that which is proposed by them for the government of the church, may become a law to ourselves and those who come after us."⁴ The synod accordingly adopted the canons of the ancient councils, and enacted others to correct the peculiar evils of their time. Guntram also summoned several synods, ratified by an edict the canons enacted by the second council of Mascon in 585, and enjoined the magistrates to unite with the bishops in enforcing obedience to them, and to subdue by civil penalties those who were not won by persuasion.⁵

Theodimir, king of the Suevi in Gallicia, embraced the

¹ Baronii Annal. an. 499, No. xxx. ² Ibid. No. xxxiii. ³ Ibid. an. 507, No. xiii.

⁴ Labbei Concil. tom. ix. p. 128.

⁵ Ibid. 963.

Catholic faith, and summoned a council in 569 to legalize it, divide his kingdom into provinces, and organize a more adequate hierarchy.¹

In 589, Reccared, king of Spain, renouncing Arianism and embracing the Catholic faith, assembled a synod at Toledo; ordered the princes and bishops, who generally had before been Arians, to adopt it; constituted it the national religion, and assumed the right of legislating over it. "After the subscription by the bishops and elders of the whole Gothic nation to the canons of the synod, and the decrees of the first general councils, our most glorious lord king Reccared, in order to the renovation and confirmation of the laws of ecclesiastical discipline, addressed the prelates thus: 'Our royal care ought to be extended to the cognizance of truth and knowledge; for the more gloriously eminent the regal power is in human affairs, the greater should be its attention to the well-being of the subject. And now, blessed prelates, we apply our thoughts, not to those things alone by which the people placed under our sway may live and be ruled peacefully, but as an auxiliary of Christ extend them to those also which are celestial, and study what may make our people Christians.'"²

The decrees accordingly by which all decisions and canons of the early councils were adopted, the letters of the bishops of Rome incorporated among their ecclesiastical laws, the church invested with the right of property, celibacy and monkery sanctioned, and the bishops and magistrates required to persecute idolaters, were ratified by him, and enforced by the penalties of excommunication, the forfeiture of goods, and exile. "All these ecclesiastical constitutions, we invest with perpetual authority. If any one refuses obedience to them, if a clergyman, whether bishop, presbyter, or deacon, let him be excommunicated; if a laic, and of a respectable rank, let him forfeit half of his goods to the treasury; if a person of inferior station, let him be amerced of his property, and dispatched into exile."³

The Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Lombards, were either pagans or Arians, and persecutors of the Catholics. It was not until the year 591, twenty-three years after the subjugation of Italy by the latter, that Agilulf, their king, embraced the faith of Pope Gregory, adopted the Catholic church, endowed it with wealth, and raised its bishops to their former honors. "Through queen Theudelinda, the church of God obtained many benefits, for the

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. ix. p. 815.

² Ibid. tom. ix. p. 989.

³ Ibid. tom. ix. p. 1000.

Lombards while still pagans had seized almost all its estates ; but the king moved by her entreaty adopted the Catholic faith, bestowed many possessions on the church, and restored the bishops, who were depressed and discouraged, to their accustomed dignity."¹ "After a reign of twenty-five years king Agilulf died in 615, leaving his kingdom to his young son Adaloald, with his mother Theudelinda, under whom the churches were restored, and the sacred places enriched with many donations."²

The monks sent by pope Gregory for the purpose of converting the pagans of England, reached that island in 596, and being allowed by Ethelbert, king of Kent and bretwalda, or head of the heptarchy, to preach in his dominions, they in the following year induced him and a large body of his subjects to embrace Christianity, and he proceeded, within a few years, to organize a hierarchy and endow the church. Augustine was made archbishop of Canterbury, and one of his associates of York, and twelve diocesans were instituted in each of those provinces. In 604, the king of Essex also received baptism, and instituted a bishop of his capital. "In 605, king Ethelbert being confirmed in the Catholic faith, celebrated Christmas at Canterbury, with Bertha the queen, their son Eadbald, the reverend prelate Augustine, and other primates, and assembling a council of the clergy and people, with their approbation and consent, gave the monastery of Peter and Paul with its endowments, through Augustine, to God, and the monks who were to serve him in it ; enriched it with many estates and other ample gifts ; put a company of monks in possession of it, and appointed Peter to be the abbot, expressing himself thus : ' In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, be it known to all, now and hereafter, that I, Ethelbert, by the grace of God king of the English, having been converted from idol-worship to Christianity by my spiritual father Augustine, have given to God through his priests, a certain part of my land along the east wall of the city of Canterbury, where I have erected a monastery in honor of the great apostles Peter and Paul, and granted the land, and every thing that pertains to the monastery, perpetual independence ; so that it shall not be lawful either for me or any successor to my kingdom, or any person, whether secular or ecclesiastical, to usurp any thing from it ; but all are to be by absolute gift the possession of its abbots : and should any one detract any thing from this our donation, or attempt to make it void, let him by the authority of God, our blessed pope Gregory, and our apostle Augustine, and

¹ P. Warnefridi de Gest. Longobard. lib. iv. c. 6.

² Ibid. lib. iv. c. 43.

also by our malediction, be separated from the communion of the holy church, and in the day of judgment from the society of the elect.”¹

When the king of the Lombards and the bretwalda of the Anglo-Saxons, thus embraced the faith of the pope, the heads of all the conquering tribes then reigning in the western empire, were Catholics, and united in assuming the peculiar relations of the wild beast, by the arrogation of legislative and judicial authority over religion, and the nationalization of their churches; and the commencement of their agency as blasphemers, is probably to be dated at that period; although the station of bretwalda was afterwards held a few years by Edwin king of Northumbria, before his conversion in 626.² They began at about that period to act in conjunction with the pope, solicit his counsel, and acknowledge his claims to authority. The bishop of London visited Rome in 610, to consult with Boniface IV., in behalf of his king probably, and of Ethelbert, in respect to the churches and monasteries in their dominions; and on his return carried letters from the pope to Ethelbert, in which he assumes authority over that prince and his prelates, and threatens them with excommunication should they violate his decrees. “We willingly concede what you have solicited of the apostolic seat by our fellow-bishop Mellitus, that your benignity should appoint the residence of all regularly living monks in the monastery, instead of the city of Dover, which your holy teacher Augustine, the disciple of pope Gregory, consecrated to the name of the divine Saviour, and over which our brother Laurentius now presides, decreeing by apostolic authority, that the preaching monks may associate with themselves a company of monks, and adorn their life with holy manners; which decree should any king of your successors, any bishop, clergyman, or laic, attempt to make void, he shall lay under the bond of an anathema by Peter the prince of the apostles, and all his successors, as long as he persists in his presumptuous attempt, and shall undergo such penance as shall propitiate God, and thoroughly remedy the disturbance.”³

Clotaire, king of the Franks, in 615 summoned a council to renew the canons of the ancient councils, and enact others: and ratified their decrees by which ecclesiastics were exempted from the jurisdiction of the civil judges, the churches confirmed in their right of receiving and holding property, and the whole sys-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. x. p. 498.

² Lingard's Hist. England, vol. i. pp. 116-125.

³ Labbei Concil. tom. x. pp. 505, 506.

tem of ecclesiastical discipline enforced.¹ By the fourth canon of the council of Rheims, held about 630, the pastors of the churches in Gaul were required to examine those who were suspected of heresy in that kingdom, and if they were found to be truly such, to recall them to the Catholic faith.²

In like manner the king of Spain assembled a synod in 633, in order to enforce the faith and discipline of the Catholic church, and the kings of the several nations continued in that manner, through the ages that followed, to arrogate authority over the laws and people of God, and sanction the assumptions, false doctrines, and idolatrous worship of the apostate church.

The popes assumed at the same period, a vast authority over the church and religion, and required submission to their will from ecclesiastics and princes. Gregory, in his letter to Theoderic, king of the Franks, in 601, representing that prince as having expressed a readiness to follow his counsels, exhorted him to use his authority to promote respect for the church and prelates, by assembling a synod, and correcting the faults of the clergy. "Since you have signified that you are pleased with our exhortations, that you should carefully ordain whatever you know is requisite to the service of God, the reverence of the church, and the honor of the priests, and wish should be uniformly observed; we repeat our suggestions, and for your good chiefly, and urge you to order a synod to be assembled, and by a sentence of all the bishops, condemn the sensuality of the clergy and simony, and cause them to be extirpated from your kingdom."³ He addressed similar letters to the French kings Theodebert and Clotaire,⁴ and also to Ethelbert of England, exhorting him to exert his authority to suppress idolatry, and spread the Christian faith among his people; sent the pall to Augustine; and gave him authority to ordain twelve bishops within the province of Canterbury, who were to be under his jurisdiction; and to institute whoever he pleased archbishop of York, with authority to ordain the same number of diocesans in that province.⁵ And if the eighth and ninth letters ascribed to him of the year 604 be genuine, he arrogated the power of divesting princes and prelates who disregarded his decrees, of authority, and subjecting them to the divine vengeance. "If any king, priest, judge, or secular person, knowing this to be our decree, shall dare to

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. x. pp. 539-544.

² Ibid. tom. x. p. 594.

³ Gregorii Epist. 59, lib. xi. Ind. iv. p. 1145.

⁴ Ibid. Epist. 60, 61, lib. xi. Ind. iv. pp. 1146, 1147.

⁵ Ibid. Epist. 65, 66, lib. xi. Ind. iv. pp. 1163, 1164.

violate it, let him lose his authority and honor, and know that he is obnoxious to divine judgment; and unless he restore what he has taken away, or undergo a suitable penance, let him be debarred from the body and blood of the Redeemer, and subjected to eternal vengeance. But the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all who appropriately observe it, so that they may receive fruit here of their good conduct, and obtain from the rigorous judge the reward of eternal rest."¹ The popes who followed Gregory assumed still more conspicuously the relation of law-givers to the church, and the monarchs in the western empire co-operated still more openly and efficiently in supporting their usurpations and idolatries, and enforcing them on their subjects.

Whether, then, the agency of the wild beast as a blasphemer, is to be regarded as having commenced with the arrogation of power over the church by Ethelbert in 597, or at a somewhat later period, it has indisputably acted in that character through nearly twelve hundred and sixty years.

It is a sufficient refutation of the absurd exposition given by Grotius, Dr. Hammond, and Rosenmuller, who exhibit the wild beast as representing idolatry, that it is against the law of symbolization, living agents never being used as symbols of mere modes of agency, and having no analogy that can fit them to be their representative.

The assumption of Mr. Mede, Dr. Cressner, Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. More, Mr. Whiston, Vitranga, Bishop Newton, Dean Woodhouse, Mr. Faber, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Elliott, and indeed, excepting the followers of Grotius, nearly the whole succession of commentators, that the wild beast is the symbol of an empire, is equally erroneous; whether it be used, as by Mr. Faber, to denote the territory, or, as by Cocceius, the population of an empire. The first is against analogy; the other, irreconcilable with the representations of the passage. There is the clearest discrimination between the wild beast and the population over whom it tyrannizes. It is worshipped by all who dwell on the earth, whose name is not written in the book of life of the Lamb. It cannot be a representative of those worshippers therefore. That were to make it both the adorer, and the object of its adoration. Authority is given to it over every tribe and people, and tongue and nation. It cannot be the representative then of those classes. That were to make it both monarch, and the subjects of its monarchy. The saints moreover who do not worship it, and whom it persecutes, are inhabitants of its terri-

¹ Gregorii Epist. 9, lib. xiii. Ind. vi. p. 1225.

tory. To suppose it to represent the whole population of an empire therefore, were to exhibit it as a representative of those who are wholly opposite to it in character, who disown its usurped authority, and whom it destroys as enemies of its sway; which were solecistical. It is the symbol then of the rulers of an empire, not of an empire itself, or its population.

As the head of an animal, the seat of perception, sensibility, and volition, presides over all its other members, and directs their movements; so the heads of this monster symbolize the chiefs of that combination of rulers, of which it is at large the representative, during the period of the diadems on the heads. The seven heads, it is said, chap. xvii. 10, are seven kings; and as a symbol when a representative of men, is universally a representative of a combination or succession of persons, and as no ground but a diversity of kind can be supposed for their discrimination, each of the seven heads must be regarded as denoting both a peculiar kind of supreme magistrates, and a succession or dynasty of its own kind; and dynasties, not that are cotemporaneous, but that follow each other,—as five, it is said at the period of the visions, are fallen, one is, and one is not yet come. The horns also are kings, and representatives of the successions of monarchs or chiefs of the body of rulers, of which the beast at large is the symbol, during the period of the diadems on the horns; as is apparent from the considerations already mentioned, and from their continuance through the period of twelve hundred and sixty years. These characteristics refute, therefore, all those expositors who, like Mr. Daubuz, exhibit the heads as symbols of cities, or, like Mr. Keith, of successive kingdoms.

The empire, of whose rulers the wild beast is the symbol, is manifestly, from many considerations, the Roman. It is an empire that was subsisting when the Apostle beheld the visions, which had already flourished through a long period, which was to continue under its dragon rule a considerable space longer, and was then to be subjected to this wild beast's dominion under the direction of the horns, and subsist under that sway through twelve hundred and sixty years. Five of its heads were already fallen, one then was, and the other had not yet come. But there is no other than the Roman empire of which those peculiarities can be affirmed;—a subsistence at that period, and under a sixth form of government—a continuance under that sixth and a seventh form, through a still further period—a division then into ten kingdoms, and subsistence under at least eight co-

temporary dynasties, twelve hundred and sixty years ; with such resemblances of laws, religion, manners, and policy, as to entitle them to be represented as still one empire—and finally, uniting in such an agency towards God and towards his worshippers, as that which is ascribed to them in this delineation. An express designation by its name, could not have rendered it more certain that it is the Roman empire. No other ever subsisted, in which, disregarding all others, the two great peculiarities denoted by the heads and the horns were united.

It is the empire which embraced the apocalyptic earth, the scene of the actors and agencies denoted by the symbols ; for it embraced the regions in which the worshippers of God then subsisted, and were to continue to subsist and suffer persecution through a long tract of ages, and in which the great body of the church was to apostatize to superstition and idolatry, become new modelled under civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and exist through many centuries in intimate connection with a combination of usurping, tyrannical, and bloody monarchies ;—and is, therefore, the Roman empire ; as it was in that that the churches were situated to which the Apocalypse was addressed ; and in that empire alone, that churches subsisted from that period without interruption through a long succession of centuries ; and that the visible church became nationalized, apostatized to idols, and existed in intimate relations with the rulers symbolized by the ten-horned wild beast. No other empire can present the slightest pretences to be the scene of those peculiar actors and agencies.

It is, finally, the fourth empire of Daniel, manifestly from the similarity of the symbols and their agency, and is therefore the Roman ; as the Roman was that fourth empire, indisputably from its following and conquering the third—from its coinciding in all its characteristics with the peculiarities of that empire's symbol—from its being the only empire that presents any such resemblances—and from its destiny, like that, to destruction immediately before the establishment of the kingdom of the saints.

The commentators who regard the wild beast as symbolizing the Roman empire, unite generally in exhibiting the forms of government which its first six heads denote as the kingly, consular, dictatorial, decemviral, tribunitial, and imperial ; but differ in respect to the seventh. Some have assigned that station to the popes. But their dynasty was never the civil head of the Roman empire, either before or after its fall ; and cannot, therefore, be the class of rulers denoted by its seventh head.

They did not become civil rulers of any part of that empire until after its subversion, and the emergence from its ruins of the ten kingdoms. They are exhibited in the vision of Daniel as springing up after the ten horns, and that is the representation also universally of the historians of their origin as political rulers. The eleventh horn, by which they are symbolized in that vision, is represented as small in comparison with the other horns, and thence cannot be the same with that which symbolizes the rulers of the whole empire. They are symbolized by the two-horned wild beast of the Apocalypse, which is cotemporary with the ten-horned wild beast, sustains towards it important relations, and exerts towards it and its subjects important agencies; and cannot, therefore, be one of its heads. And finally, the seventh head was to continue but a short time, but the papal rule has subsisted through a longer period than that of the first six heads united.

Dr. Cressner and some others, regarded the Gothic kings who reigned at Rome a short period after the abdication of Augustulus, as the seventh head. But they were never the head of the Roman empire in any sense—first, as their reign was subsequent to its subversion; and next, as they reigned by the former laws of the empire so far as they made them their guide, not by any conditions of their office, but only as they chose to adopt them.

Mr. Mede regarded the Latin emperors, after the division of the empire into the eastern and western, as the seventh head. But that is to exhibit the sixth and seventh heads as cotemporaneous, which is solecistical, and contradictory to the representation in the seventeenth chapter, that those heads were successive.

Cocceius regarded the beast as the symbol of the Roman people as falsely professing Christianity; the seven heads as representing the five ecclesiastical patriarchs of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome, and the synods of Gaul and Spain; and the ten horns as denoting kings of the ten European kingdoms. But that exposition of the heads contradicts the text, by making the beast the symbol of those who worship it—by representing the first five heads that had fallen at the period of the visions as still future—and finally, by making the fifth, sixth, and seventh heads, symbols of persons who are represented by the two-horned wild beast and the image.

Mr. Faber regards Bonaparte, the head of the French empire, as the seventh head. But that is to exhibit the seventh head as

the same as one of the ten horns, which is irreconcilable with the symbol. It is to exhibit the seventh head as ruling the empire, in the same sense, during the sway of the ten horns, as it was ruled by the previous heads anterior to the rise of the horns; which is inconsistent with the symbol. It is to exhibit the period of the seventh head's rule as wholly after the diadems on the heads had been superseded by diadems on the horns, which is also to contradict the symbol.

Mr. Elliott regards the seventh head as constituted from the sixth, by the adoption or creation of a second or associate Augustus by Diocletian. But that did not essentially alter the nature of the rule. The mode of appointment to the station of Augustus and Cæsar, continued the same as before; the ground and extent of the imperial authority, the laws and the mode of enacting them; and it is refuted by the implication which it presents, that the seventh head, instead of but a single, received several death-wounds. If the union of two Augusti constituted the seventh head, then the fall of one and the return of the imperial rule to the hands of an individual, must have been its death. But there were several periods after the abdication of Diocletian, when the sceptre was held by a single Augustus. Constantine himself had no such associate after the fall of Licinius; nor had Constantius, after the death of his brothers; nor Jovian, Valentinian, Valens, Gratian, or Theodosius the Great, during a portion of their reigns. That author, indeed, exhibits paganism, as the seventh head that was wounded to death. But that is to contradict his exposition of the beast as a symbol of the Roman empire, and of its heads as representing its forms of government. It is inconsistent with analogy also; paganism being, not a combination of successive agents, but a mere mode of agency, or system of false faith and worship, and cannot therefore be symbolized by a living agent, which is a representative of living agents only, not of mere modes of faith or action.

But the characteristics of the seventh head are found only in Constantine and his successors. He introduced, by the recognition and adoption of the Christian religion, a new principle into the government, placed his own authority in a degree, and many of the rights of the people on new grounds, and changed the relations of the throne to every one of his subjects. Idolatry had before been the religion of the state; but he made Christianity an element of the constitution and a basis of power, and wrought thereby at length a revolution in the laws and administration of the empire. It was pre-eminently a political change, and in that

relation marked by more important peculiarities than distinguished either of the forms of rule under the other six heads. Though nominally Christian, yet it is justly exhibited as a dragon head; inasmuch as like its predecessor, it usurped the throne of God, demanding a religious homage of itself, and arrogating the right to dictate the faith and worship of its subjects, and because it continued the worship of false deities and sanctioned it in others. The interruption of the succession of Christian emperors by the elevation of Julian, a zealous and bigoted pagan, who re-established the ancient polytheism, and endeavored to exterminate Christianity, and the speedy restoration of the Christian line in Jovian, were such events as the death wound and recovery of the seventh head were adapted to represent, and were the only events of that nature that marked that dynasty. And finally, this construction is confirmed by the representation in a subsequent verse, that the image which was made to the beast of ten horns, was an image of the beast in that form in which it existed when it received the death wound; as that image, as will be shown, was an ecclesiastical government, or organization of ecclesiastical rulers and teachers in the eight kingdoms, essentially like that established by the papal horn in its own dominion; and the head of the beast accordingly after which it was modelled, was that of Constantine and his successors, by whom the church was first organized in a similar manner, and raised to a similar relation to the state.

Commentators vary in their views of the kingdoms whose kings are denoted by the ten horns, and the period of the wild beast's emergence from the sea. Its emergence took place doubtless at the moment of the formation of the last of the ten kingdoms, as the horns were seen with their diadems on its egress from the sea; and as was natural and is implied in the order in which they are mentioned, before the heads became visible. It is represented accordingly in the seventeenth chapter, that they received their power the same hour with the beast. The rule of the empire was reconstructed so as to be a counterpart to the wild beast its representative, when the territory being all conquered by the Goths and the Roman rule extinguished, its population was first distributed under ten separate governments. That distribution is assigned by Mr. Mede to the year 456, which is doubtless too early, as it was anterior to the subversion of the western empire by the Ostrogoths. Dr. Allix refers it to the year 486, which is too late, as it was ten years subsequent to the termination of the imperial power, and transition of the whole territory to the Gothic sway.

SECTION XXXII.

CHAPTER XIII. 11-18.

THE TWO-HORNED WILD BEAST AND THE IMAGE.

AND I saw another wild beast ascending from the earth. And it had two horns like a lamb; and it spake as a dragon. And it exercises all the power of the first wild beast in its presence. And it causes the earth, and those who inhabit it, to worship the first wild beast whose death wound was healed. And it works great wonders, so that it can even make fire to descend from heaven to the earth before men; and can deceive those who dwell on the earth, through the wonders which are given to it to work before the wild beast; telling those who dwell on the earth, to make an image to the wild beast which has the wound of the sword and lived. And it was given to it to give breath to the image of the wild beast, that the image of the wild beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the wild beast, should be killed. And it causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the enslaved, to give to themselves a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead; and that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except he who has the mark, the name of the wild beast, or the number of its name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding compute the number of the wild beast, for it is a number of a man, and its number six hundred sixty-six.

The land or earth when distinguished from the sea, denotes the population of an empire under a settled government, anterior to an invasion or revolution, as in the symbols of the first trumpet and first vial: and when distinguished, as in the second verse of this passage, from those who inhabit it, appears to represent its native population in discrimination from its conquerors. The ascent of this wild beast from the earth therefore, signifies that it drew its origin from the native population of the empire; not from the foreigners who conquered it, and erected the ten kingdoms out of its ruins. It was not the creature of the Gothic nations. It sprung not from their faith, their manners, or their policy. Instead, it was generated by the Latins, whom they conquered, and was the offspring of the corrupt faith, the infatuated superstition, and the impious ambition, with which that people had become infected before the subversion of their empire.

It had two horns, the symbols of a twofold monarchy or rule; and like a lamb's, apparently for ornament merely and defence,

not for aggression. But it spake as a dragon, an aggressive, carnivorous, insatiable, and merciless brute. It exercises all the power of the first wild beast; similar power as a civil ruler and tyrant of its vassals; similar power as an ambitious and lawless warrior; similar power as a usurper of dominion over the rights of God, and the obligations and consciences of its subjects; and it exercises that power in the presence of the ten-horned wild beast; coterminously with it therefore, by its allowance, and with its sanction.

It excites the earth, the native Latin population, and they who inhabit it, the Gothic nations who became their conquerors, to worship the wild beast, whose death wound was healed. The introduction here, and the repetition in a subsequent verse, of this mark of the wild beast, denotes that the rulers of the empire, whom the people were excited to worship, were those who were represented by the head that received the death wound, and implies that their peculiarities were eminently congenial to the principles and passions of this two-horned wild beast, and that it for that reason desired to render them characteristics also of the new monarchies of the empire.

It works great wonders. It exerts acts and produces appearances that seem to be miraculous, and which it pretends are proofs that it enjoys the co-operation and sanction of the Almighty; as the descent of fire from heaven, by which their sacrifices were consumed, was a proof that the ancient prophets acted by his authority. By the pretended miracles which it works in the presence of the rulers of the kingdoms, it deceives the conquering nations into the conviction that it is truly a prophet of God, and possesses the prerogatives which it claims; and through the influence it thus attains, prompts them to make an image to the wild beast which has the wound of a sword and lived. As that beast symbolized a combination and succession of persons who were the legal rulers of the empire, and exercised its government; an image to that official and authoritative organization, must be a resembling organization in some other department of life; and the religious therefore, as that is the only one besides the civil and military, which the wild beast itself represented. An image is not of the same nature as that which it represents. It is only of the same form, and expressive of the same characteristics. This image is an image to the first wild beast under its ten horns. It is its coterminous and rival therefore under the reign of the horns. The wild beast of which it is the image, is that wild beast under the reign of its seventh head. To prompt

the Gothic conquerors to make an image of that wild beast, under its head that received a death wound, was accordingly to prompt them to erect an ecclesiastical government or hierarchy, coextensive with their territories, and embracing a regular gradation of ranks, like the government of the empire under Constantine and his successors, founded on similar principles, and animated by a similar spirit. That involved an arrogation of dominion over the religion of their subjects, an adoption of the Christian religion as the religion of their states, and the union of their several hierarchies in one, and subjection to a common head; as those were the peculiarities that distinguished the rulers of the ancient empire represented by the seventh head, from those denoted by the sixth. Into the imperial hierarchy which it thus induced the Gothic nations to erect, it infused such power; such zeal, such ambition, and such a unity of purpose, that it acted as one gigantic individual, moved by its own inherent energies, and swayed by a single spirit; claimed an absolute dominion over the religion of those within its territory, and caused that as many as would not sanction its imperious assumptions, and submit to its sway, should be put to death.

And it causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the enslaved, to impress on themselves a conspicuous mark in token of their submission to its claims, and that no one can without that mark enjoy the right of property, or opportunity to gain a subsistence. That mark is the name of the wild beast in that form in which it subsisted under the head that received the death wound; or the number of that name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding compute the number of that beast, for it is a number of a man, and its number six hundred sixty-six. As the Greeks used their alphabetic letters as representatives of numbers, the letters of every name and word might be taken as signs of arithmetical numbers, as well as of sounds. To compute the number of a name, is therefore to ascertain the sum total of the numbers, which its letters in their arithmetical use represent. That that is the process enjoined, is shown moreover by the expression of the sum of the name, six hundred sixty-six by the letters χ . ξ . ς .—chi, zi, and stigma, or σ and ς united. This number of the beast is the number of a man. It is the number of the distinguishing name of a family of men, a race or a nation, as Persian instead of Babylonian, or Greek instead of Roman; and is the name of that family or race, therefore, from which the nation drew its origin which the wild beast under its seventh head ruled; not of any of the con-

quering nations over which after its emergence from the sea, the dynasties denoted by its ten horns reigned. It is the name of the beast after whose pattern the new structure is formed. That beast is the wild beast which had the death wound and lived; and that was that wild beast under its seventh head; first, because it is an image not of the ten-horned wild beast, when swayed by the horns, but *to* it; that is, cotemporary, of an analogous power, and a rival: and next because no other than the seventh head of the wild beast received a death wound and lived. A death wound by a sword, must have been an interception for a space by that instrument, of the imperial sway which that head represented, and institution of an essentially different supreme rule in its place; and under an appearance of permanency; but which soon gave way to a re-establishment of the previous head. But no such interception of the imperial government took place anterior to the elevation of Constantine, and no different form superseded through any considerable period, that which he instituted, or followed it after its final close. The shape into which he moulded the government, was its last, the one which it thereafter bore except during the short reign of Julian; and its seventh therefore.

What then are the great combinations of agents denoted by these three symbols;—the two-horned wild beast; the wild beast whose seventh head received a death wound; and the image? All the characteristics of the two-horned wild beast are found conspicuously in the hierarchy of the Italian Catholic church within the papal dominions, and in no other succession in the Roman empire or the world.

I. That hierarchy had its origin in the ancient Latin population, not in their barbarian conquerors. Rome, its metropolis, was in Latium, the native seat of the people that founded the Roman empire, and was the capital from which it drew its denomination; and it had subsisted as a nationalized hierarchy one hundred and sixty-three years, at the final conquest of Rome by the Heruli, and full emergence of the ten-horned wild beast from the sea.¹

II. It was invested by the kings of France in a subsequent age, with a civil dominion also over Latium and some of its other ecclesiastical territories, and thence became a twofold monarchy, answering to its symbolization by two horns; and the pope its head reigned over its political kingdom as its civil

¹ The edict of Constantine, by which the church was nationalized, was issued in 313: the conquest of Rome, and emergence of the wild beast, took place in 476.

and military chief, in the same manner as the monarchs denoted by the horns of the first wild beast reigned over theirs.

The attempt of the emperor Leo the Isaurian, in 727, to enforce his decree against the worship of images on his Italian subjects, excited them under the guidance of Pope Gregory II. to revolt, and transfer their allegiance from the empire to the apostolic seat. "Exasperated against the emperor, they resolutely rejected his tyrannical sway, and pledged themselves by a solemn oath to defend the life and station of the pontiff, and yield obedience in all things to his authority."¹ The Lombards united with Venice, Ravenna, and the cities of the Exarchate and Pentapolis in the support of the pope, but subsequently proceeding to conquer the territory of the empire, seize the estates of the church, and threaten the subjugation of Rome,² pope Stephen III. in 754 solicited protection from Pepin of France, who on the consent of his court and army to accede to the wishes of the pontiff, promised if God enabled him to conquer the Lombards, to give, in order to the remission of his sins, the Exarchate and Pentapolis to the blessed Peter and his successors as a perpetual possession,³ and defeating Aistulf, forced him to promise the surrender of those and all the other territories which he had conquered from the Greeks, to the pope.⁴ On his declining to fulfil the engagement, Pepin in 755 again crossed the Alps, and reducing the Lombards to submission, put the bishop of Rome in possession of those cities, and constituted him thereby a civil prince, though in dependence on the French crown.⁵ Desiderius, king of the Lombards, invading the territory of the church, and threatening Rome in 773, at the pontiff's solicitation, Charlemagne advanced into Italy for his relief, conquered the Lombards, and causing himself in the following year to be proclaimed their king, confirmed the donation of the Exarchate and Pentapolis to the pope, and enlarged his domains by the gift of several other cities and provinces.⁶ And those territories, with the exception of several short periods, have continued under the civil dominion of the popes, through all the ages that have followed.

The popes, accordingly, represent themselves as exercising a twofold monarchy. Boniface VIII., in his bull *Unam Sanctam*, said: "We are taught by the gospel that there are two swords in the pontiff's hands, the spiritual and the temporal. For when the apostle said, behold here are two swords, that is in the church,

¹ Sigonii de Regno Ital. lib. iii. anno 727.

² Ibid. lib. iii. anno 753, 754.

³ Ibid. lib. iii. anno 755.

⁴ Ibid. lib. iii. anno 752.

⁵ Ibid. lib. iii. anno 754.

⁶ Ibid. lib. iii. anno 773.

the Lord did not reply, they are too many, but enough. Assuredly he who denies that the temporal sword was in the power of Peter, notices very inadequately the Lord's answer,—put thy sword into the sheath. Each sword, therefore, the spiritual and the material, is in the power of the church."¹

III. Its horns were like a lamb's, indicating a harmless spirit ; but it spoke with a dragon voice.

The popes have professed to exert their civil as well as their ecclesiastical rule, as ministers of religion and successors of the apostles : but have been distinguished beyond any other dynasty of monarchs, for imperiousness, tyranny, and a brutal delight in the blood of their subjects. They have maintained their sway through the long period of near eleven centuries, not by the methods of a just and wise government, not by studying the cultivation of their people, securing their liberties, fostering their wealth, or promoting their happiness ; but solely by the engines of a remorseless despotism, the gibbet, the stake, the sword, and the still more cruel terrors of a debasing superstition. They have claimed at every period the most abject submission to their will, and not only visited slight political transgressions with a bloody retribution, but exalted a dissent from their opinions, even on questions of philosophy and science, into the rank of capital offences, and avenged them with a severity, which, in other empires, is assigned only to the most flagitious crimes. No other monarchy in Europe has been so jealous of its prerogatives ; so quick and unappeasable in resentment ; nor so devoid of pity towards its victims. No other has made its subjects in such a degree the mere instruments of its insatiable appetites ; debarred them to such an extent from the culture, prosperity, and enjoyment, of which they were capable ; crushed them with such oppression ; or consigned them in such vast crowds, not merely for crimes, but for virtues, to chains, to torture, and to death. Its history is the history of a ferocious brute, spreading terror, by its imperious voice, into every scene into which it penetrates, and perpetually preying on the blood of the unoffending and helpless.

IV. It exercised the same power as the first wild beast, and coterminously with it. It was a civil and military power, as were the monarchies around it. Like them it arrogated absolute authority over the property, persons, and lives of its subjects ; issued and executed decrees, and levied taxes ; and like

¹ Decret. Extravagan. lib. i. tit. viii. c. l.

them it raised armies, made war on its neighbors, fought battles, and conquered territories.

V. It prompted the earth, the native population of the empire, and those who inhabit it, the Gothic conquerors, to worship the first wild beast whose death wound was healed. The first wild beast whose death wound was healed, was the ten-horned wild beast when under the sway of its seventh head, the symbol of the succession of Christian emperors from Constantine to Augustulus. The worship which the native and barbarian population of the empire were induced to offer to those emperors, was involved in the ascription to them of the rights of God, and treatment of their arrogation of authority over his laws and his people in their relations to him as creator, and moral governor, as legitimate. The two-horned wild beast induced them, in the most direct and formal manner, to offer that homage, by persuading them that the forged edict ascribed to Constantine was the work of that emperor, and that he had the absolute authority over the laws and the church of God, which that document exhibits him as assuming. "In the name of the holy and indivisible Trinity, the emperor Cæsar Flavius Constantine to the holy and blessed father of fathers, Sylvester, bishop and pope of the city of Rome, and all his successors, who shall sit in the chair of the blessed Peter to the end of the world, and to all prelates and Catholic bishops throughout the world, now and hereafter made subject by this edict to him, grace and peace." "We, together with all our prefects, the senate, all men of rank, and the whole population of the empire, have judged it useful, that, as the holy Peter is seen to have been constituted the vicar of the Son of God on earth, the pontiffs also, who are successors of that prince of the apostles, should obtain by concession from us and our empire, the power of a princely rule more ample than our imperial serenity possesses, electing that prince of the apostles and his successors assured intercessors for us with God; and we decree that the holy Roman church shall be reverently honored like our imperial power, and the sacred chair of the blessed Peter more exalted than our earthly imperial throne; ascribing to it an imperial power, dignity, strength, and merit of honor; and ordaining that it shall have dominion as well over the principal seats, Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, as over all the church of God throughout the world; and he who is for the time pontiff of the holy Roman church, shall be superior and prince to all the priests of the world; and whatever shall be ordained in order to the honor of God and the sta-

bility of the faith of Christians, shall be disposed by his judgment."¹

In this edict Constantine is exhibited as assuming absolute authority over all the churches of God, and by virtue of it investing the pope of Rome with supreme dominion over them, and power to ordain laws in regard to their faith and worship; rendering his canons and decrees as obligatory, on all bishops and churches, as the imperial edicts were on the subjects of the civil empire; and granting him a title equal to that of the emperors to awe, submission, and honor. But that was to exhibit him as arrogating an absolute dominion over the rights and laws of God. If he could in that manner create a monarch of the church at his pleasure, endow him with power to legislate as he pleased respecting the worship of God and the faith of his people, and make his will as obligatory on the churches as the imperial laws were on the civil subjects, so that its violation was constituted a crime meriting condign punishment, like flagitious offences against the imperial authority; then his power obviously was under no subordination to the divine rights, but was absolute, and as adequate to set aside the laws of God as to impose obligations on men.

The popes used this edict to induce the princes and people to yield them the territory and authority which it exhibited Constantine as having conferred on them. It was thus employed by Hadrian I. to induce Charlemagne to restore to the church the estates and territory wrested from the papacy by the Lombards. "We implore you, illustrious king, for the love of God and his keybearer of the kingdom of heaven, who condescended to bestow on you the throne of your father's kingdom, that, according to the promise which you made to that apostle of God for the benefit of your soul and the stability of your kingdom, you would order all to be fulfilled in our times; that the church of Almighty God, that is of the blessed Peter the apostle, to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the power of loosing and binding liability for the commission of all crimes was given, may in all things be more and more exalted, and that all things may be fulfilled according to your promise, and then a recompense will be assigned to you in the celestial court, and a good reputation throughout the world. And as in the times of the blessed Roman pontiff Sylvester, by the donation of the most pious emperor Constantine the Great, of holy memory, the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic church of God was advanced, exalted,

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. ii. pp. 603-607.

and dignified, by a gift of power over these parts of the west ; so also in these most felicitous times of ours, the holy church of God, that is of the blessed Peter the apostle, may flourish, and rejoice, and become still more exalted, so that all nations that hear it may say, Lord, give the king safety, and hear us when we invoke thee ; for behold the modern, most Christian emperor, Constantine, has risen in these times, through whom God has deigned to bestow all things on his holy church of Peter the prince of the blessed apostles. But all others also which have been granted to the blessed apostle Peter and the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic church of God by different emperors, patricians also, and others who feared God, for the benefit of their souls and forgiveness of their sins, in Tuscany, Spoleto, Benevento, in Corsica also, and the Sabine patrimony, and which have been usurped and taken away by the nefarious Lombards, should be restored in your times. We have from those places many deeds of gift deposited in our archives in the Lateran, and, for the satisfaction of your most Christian empire, we have directed that they be shown to you. And we therefore pray your excellence to order this patrimony to be wholly restored to the blessed Peter and us, that, while the holy church of God receives all through your appropriate appointment, the prince himself of the apostles, the blessed Peter, may, before the tribunal, invoke the clemency of the Almighty for your safety and long life, and the exaltation of your powerful kingdom.”¹

The edict of Constantine was doubtless among the deeds of gift which were shown to Charlemagne on that occasion. It was appealed to in like manner by Leo IX. in his attempt to convince Michael the patriarch of Constantinople, of the supreme authority of the Roman see.² It was incorporated by Isidore in his collection of the canons, and subsequently by Gratian, and made a part of the ecclesiastical law ; was quoted by the advocates of the church in the council summoned by Henry of Germany in 1062,³ and an acknowledgment of it exacted by Gregory VII. from the princes of Germany, and an oath on their induction into office, to maintain the church in the possessions and prerogatives which it professed to confer. “ We show by the annexed oath, what the holy Roman church exacts from him, who is to be chosen king in the place of Rudolph. ‘ I will, from this hour, be faithful, with a true allegiance, to the blessed Peter the apostle, and his vicar pope Gregory, who now lives, and whatever the

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xii. pp. 820, 821.

² Ibid. tom. xix. p. 641.

³ Baronii Annal. anno 1062, No. xxviii.

pope commands me, under the words—by a true obedience—I will, as becomes a Christian, faithfully observe. And in regard to the administration of the churches and the lands, or revenues which the emperor Constantine or Charles gave to the holy Peter, and in respect to all churches and estates that have been presented or conceded to the apostolic seat by any man or woman at any time, and are or shall be at my disposal, I will so confer with the pope, as not to incur the danger of sacrilege and perdition of my soul.”¹

The popes accordingly, in treating that edict as authentic, as conveying to them the power which it professes to confer, and as obligatory on the princes, churches, and people of the empire, treated Constantine as truly possessing the peculiar rights and prerogatives of the Deity, and entitled to a homage that is due only to him. And in persuading princes and people to regard and honor the emperor as possessing that supreme authority, they persuaded them to impute to him prerogatives, and pay to him a homage, that belong only to God.

VI. It wrought great wonders, so as to deceive the Gothic nations into the belief that it enjoyed in its doctrines and pretensions the sanction of God.

The popes and their subordinates have professed to enjoy miraculous powers through every age, from the period of the conversion of the Gothic kings to their faith, and have employed the innumerable wonders which they represent as having been wrought in connection with their agency, to convince the rulers and people of their divine mission. Thus miracles are asserted to have been wrought at the conversion, baptism, and coronation of Clovis, to confirm him and his people in the Christian faith, and inspire them with confidence in the doctrines of St. Vedastus and St. Remigius.² Miracles are related to have been wrought

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 343.

² “The gospel relates that the Lord Jesus going to Jericho, in order to confirm the people who were present in their belief of his deity, restored sight to the eyes of a blind man who called to him, so that by the gift of sight to the body of one who was blind, the minds of many were spiritually enlightened. And so also St. Vedastus, by the aid of Christ, through the illumination of a blind man, miraculously confirmed the king in the faith which he had preached: for his excellency, travelling with a suitable attendance and a great multitude of people, came to a hamlet near the villa Reguliaca, on the flowery banks of the Aisne, where, as he passed the head of the stream, a blind man met him, who had long been deprived of sight, perhaps not by his own fault, but that the works of God might be manifested in him, and by his restoration to sight, the hearts of many be spiritually enlightened; who when he understood from those who were passing that St. Vedastus the servant of Christ was in the train, cried, O holy Vedastus, and chosen of God, have mercy on me, and earnestly invoke the divine power to relieve my misery. I ask

at the conversion of Ethelbert of England.¹ The works of Gregory the Great abound with stories of prodigies granted, as he represents, for the vindication of the Catholic church, the support of the papacy, and the refutation of heretics. The ecclesiastical annals of Baronius and Raynald ascribe thousands of miracles to the popes, prelates, monks, and other members of the Romish hierarchy, wrought in demonstration of the legitimacy of their claims to divine authority, and the truth of their doctrines; and the decrees of canonization allege the possession of miraculous powers as a mark of the saintship of those who are canonized, and proof of their title to that honor. Gregory VII. also, the principal instigator of the erection of the image, made pretensions to miraculous powers. "Anastasius asserts it as undoubted in his time, that Gregory was famous for miracles, not only during his life, but after his death; for as the Acts relate that aprons and handkerchiefs from Paul were used by believers to remove illnesses and expel demons, so the articles worn by Gregory were endowed by God with the same power, as you may see from the following narrative by an author of that age, in the life of St. Anselm: 'Gregory sent his mitre to Anselm as a badge of the power of binding and loosing, and as, I believe, of working miracles also; for we all know not long after, through his counsel and

not gold nor silver, but that sight may be restored to me through your holiness's prayers. The holy man, therefore, conscious that divine power was present with him, not only in order to the cure of the blind man, but still more for the salvation of the people who were present, poured out his heart in holy prayer, confiding in the divine grace, and placed his right hand with the sign of the cross over the blind man's eyes, saying, Lord Jesus, who art the true light, who didst open the eyes of the blind man who cried to thee, open the eyes of this man that the people who are present may discern that thou art God alone, who dost wondrous things in heaven and earth. Immediately the blind man went his way, rejoicing in the recovery of his sight. A church was afterwards built on the place by pious men in memory of the miracle, and divine gifts are bestowed to this day on those who pray in it in faith.

"Therefore, the king having been well instructed by the man of God in the evangelical discipline, and confirmed in the faith by this miracle, made no delay, but proceeded with the utmost alacrity to see the holy pontiff Remigius, that by his hallowed ministry and the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, he might be washed in the living fountain of Catholic baptism in order to the remission of sins, and the hope of eternal life."—Baronii Annal. an. 499, no. 23, 24, 25.

Pope Hormisdas in like manner, if the letter to Remigius ascribed to him be genuine, represents that saint as having converted the king through miracles equal in number and greatness to those of the apostolic age. "We hereby constitute you our vicar—saving the privileges which antiquity ascribes to metropolitans—through the whole kingdom of our blessed and spiritual son Clovis, whom, through the aids of divine grace and numerous miracles, equalling the wonders of apostolic times, which have accompanied your preaching, you have lately converted with the whole nation, and consecrated by baptism."—Baronii Annal. an. 499, no. 27.

¹ Gregorii Mag. Epist. 28, lib. xi. Ind. iv. p. 1110.

great faith, God wrought illustrious miracles by that mitre ; for among others, the reverend bishop of Mantua, Ubaldus, who had suffered severely many years with the spleen, and become covered with ulcers so that he could scarcely stand, sit, walk, or recline, and had spent much on physicians without any benefit ; put on that mitre during a paroxysm of pain, and was instantly restored to health. The great and happy master Gregory thus wrought many miracles both living and dead ; the good disciple Anselm did also."¹

VII. It prompted the Gothic rulers to make an image to the wild beast which received the death-wound and lived, by the union of their several national churches into a single hierarchy, and subjection of them to the pope as their supreme legislative and judicial head, after the model of the ancient civil empire under Constantine and his successors, who are symbolized by the head which was wounded and lived.

For near two centuries from the conversion of the Gothic kings, and the commencement of their co-operation with the popes in enforcing the Catholic religion on their subjects, those prelates neither exerted nor claimed any absolute jurisdiction over the churches out of their own patriarchate. They were acknowledged as successors to Peter, and the first bishops of the church, respected as of high authority in doctrine and discipline, and consulted by princes and prelates on questions of importance ; but their decisions were advisory, not legislative and judicial, and became obligatory on the church only by adoption and ratification by princes and councils.²

The pastors of churches until the eighth or ninth century were elected either by their congregations, or appointed by the bishops of the diocese in which they were installed. The bishops were elected by their clergy, with the consent, after the seventh and eighth centuries, of the princes to whom they owed allegiance ; and the metropolitans by their bishops.³ All questions between the bishops were settled by provincial or national synods, or if appeals were made to Rome, they were voluntary and from motives of expediency, not of necessity.⁴

Soon, however, after the erection of the papacy by Pepin and Charlemagne into a civil kingdom, the popes began openly to

¹ Baronii Annal. an. 1085, no. xiii.

² Bossuetii Defen. Decl. Præv. Diss. c. 61.

³ Van Espen, Jus. Canon. pr. i. tit. xiii. c. i.

⁴ Petri de Marca, Concord. Sacerd. et Imp. lib. vii. c. 13. Febronii de Statu Ecc. c. iii. s. 7.

aspire to an ecclesiastical dominion over the churches of the other kingdoms. They represented their decrees as of universal authority, they interfered in appointments to benefices, they claimed the right of determining ecclesiastical questions; and to support their pretences, procured the fabrication of a vast body of letters in the names of the earlier popes, and other documents, which exhibited them as exerting legislative and judicial authority over the whole church, and representing princes, prelates, and churches as acknowledging that jurisdiction, inserted them among the canons, and constituted them a part of the ecclesiastical law.

Thus those forged letters exhibited the Roman church as invested with supreme power over all other churches. "The other patriarchal churches of which we send you a catalogue, received their primates from the holy Apostle and the blessed Clemens, or from us; but this holy Roman and apostolic church obtained the primacy, not from the apostles, but from the Lord himself our Saviour, and acquired supreme power over all churches, and the whole flock of Christian nations?"—"Paul also was associated with Peter in the city of Rome, and crowned at the same time with a glorious death under Nero; and they together consecrated the holy Roman church, and exalted it by their presence and triumph over all other cities in the world."—"By the divine beneficence, therefore, the first seat is that of the holy Roman church, which Peter and Paul consecrated by their martyrdom."¹

They claimed the power of giving authority to ecclesiastical laws. "We give validity to the laws of the Church by apostolical authority—and set aside foreign or secular judgments."²

They represented the violation of their canons as a crime that consigned the perpetrator to destruction. "We do not wish to destroy any one, but he destroys himself who deliberately violates the decrees of the apostles, and this holy seat."³

They claimed the right of determining all ecclesiastical causes that were referred to them by appeal, and assigned to all litigants the right of appeal to their tribunal. "But if difficult causes arise among you, refer them to this seat as the head, that they may be terminated by an apostolic judgment; for so the Lord wills, and so he ordained, as has been shown; for this apostolical seat was constituted the hinge and head of all churches by him, and not any one else, and as a door is governed by the hinge,

¹ Anacleti Epist. iii. Labbei Concil. tom. i. pp. 616, 617.

² Anacleti Epist. i. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 605.

³ Sixti Epist. ii. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 654.

so by the Lord's appointment all churches are governed by the authority of this holy seat."¹

They represented it as the office of the pontiffs to ratify the decisions of metropolitans and other bishops, and render them authoritative. "In regard to the accusations of clergymen respecting which you ask advice, as it is difficult to refer all such causes to the apostolic seat, let the final decisions of the bishops only be referred here, that they may be finished by the authority of this holy seat, as has been decreed by the apostles and their successors, with the concurrence of many bishops."² "It is reported to this apostolic seat that you judge the cause of bishops, which it is not lawful for you to decide without our authority, for it has been a rule from the time of the apostles, that a bishop accused or judged in any cause by the bishops of his province, might freely appeal and come to the pontiff of this seat, who of himself or through his vicars may re-examine his cause."³

These forgeries were incorporated by Isidore in his collection of the canons; a part of them was introduced by Agilramnus in 785 into his, and by Reginon, into his in the tenth century;⁴ and were the grounds on which the pontiffs founded their claims to a jurisdiction over the whole church, and the most efficient means of persuading princes, prelates, and people, to acquiesce in them. They received the public sanction of the popes, were quoted by them in vindication of their usurpations, and enforced by them as far as in their power on the churches, and gained in a brief period a general reception and vast influence.

"The ancient code was comprised in a single volume of moderate size, and consisted of the canons of early councils and decisions of some of the Roman pontiffs. That book the church used down to the age of Charlemagne. But then when the monarchies were changed, as by a fatal necessity, the ecclesiastical law also was changed, and to the ancient one which had prevailed through more than seven hundred years, succeeded a new code made up of forged letters of Roman pontiffs, produced by the impudent Isidore, and new decrees of the popes who filled the apostolic seat after the age of Charlemagne. That code had to struggle against a strong opposition. The fortune of the Romans however as usual prevailed, so that after those times nothing

¹ Anacleti Epist. iii. c. iv. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 618; also Sixti Epist. ii. tom. i. pp. 653, 654.

² Eleutherii Epist. i. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 695.

³ Victoris i. Epist. i. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 701.

⁴ Van Espen, de Collect. Can. pr. iv. v. pp. 100-110.

rung more frequently in the ears of Christians, than the authority and allegation of these new epistles; especially when attempts were made against ancient customs and usages, that had long prevailed in the provinces.

“The age of Charlemagne, in which the new code was introduced, was favorable, on account of the extreme confusion which the wretched and astonishing ignorance of the bishops and their clergy, and inacquaintance with the ancient canons, occasioned in the government of the church. Produced in France at that period of perturbation by Riculf, archbishop of Mentz, those letters ascribed to the early Roman bishops struck the minds of all, because of the names of the holy pontiffs which they bore, and the new views they exhibited of antiquity. Thence a feeling rose that it was not lawful to doubt their authority; and from that time the venerated canons of the early councils and the authentic decrees of the early pontiffs of the apostolic seat, which had been of the highest authority through so many years, gradually sunk into contempt, while the new were held in high honor.”¹

The principal doctrines of this new code were soon embodied by the pontiffs in new decrees, and enforced on the ecclesiastics beyond the Alps. Thus Nicolas I., who held the papal throne from 858 to 867: “The Roman church instituted all others, whether of patriarchal or metropolitan rank, the seats of bishops, or other grades of dignity.”—“By the princely hand of the blessed Peter and Paul we have power and right not only over monks, but over all the clergy of whatever rank of every diocese.”—“It is clear that the sentence of the apostolic seat is not to be superseded by any one; nor is it lawful for any one to judge its decisions.”²

A formal acknowledgment of the supremacy of the pope by a profession of faith, and solicitation and reception from him of the pall, was made a condition of admission to the higher offices of the church. Thus it was decreed by the synod of Ravenna under John VIII. in 877, “that any metropolitan who did not within three months of his consecration send a profession of his faith, and receive the pall from the apostolic seat, unless unavoidably prevented, should lose his office, and be divested of authority to consecrate, as long as he disregarded the ancient usage of making a profession of faith and soliciting the pall.”³

The popes were accustomed to refuse the pall to those whose

¹ S. Baluzii Præf. ad Dial. Ant. Augustini de Emend. Gratiani, pp. 7, 8.

² Nicolai i. decret. Labbei Concil. tom. xv. p. 436.

³ Labbei Concil. tom. xvii. p. 337.

faith was not satisfactory to them, or who declined to acknowledge the authority of the pontifical decrees. Thus the same pontiff: "We cannot now bestow on you the pall which you desire, because we find the statement of your faith is less full than it ought to be, for you make no mention in it, as is customary, either of the ancient general councils, which contain the symbol of our faith, nor of the decretal constitutions of the Roman pontiffs; nor have you confirmed it by your signature, nor sent any one who can verify it by oath."¹ And they denounced an anathema on all who disregarded their decrees. Thus Nicolas I.: "If any one shall contemn the dogmas, mandates, interdicts, canons, or decrees, promulged by the pontiffs of the apostolic seat in favor of the Catholic faith, or discipline of the church, in order to the correction of present or future evils, let him be accursed."²

By these extraordinary means the pontiffs soon made great accessions to their power. They were far, however, from being wholly successful, especially with some of the prelates of France, who detected their forgeries, disowned their authority, and continued to maintain in a large degree their independence: and they met still greater obstruction from several of the monarchs. As they held their temporal dominions as a dependence, first, of the kings of France, and subsequently of the emperors of Germany, and the assent of those princes at each election was requisite in order to the investiture of the pope, the appointment of the pontiffs was in effect transferred from the church itself to them, and thence made a check to their ambition, and a means of their vassalage. The office was bestowed on favorites of the court, and made the reward of past, or condition of future subserviency. But those princes were not long content with the disposal of the first office of the church. They began also to usurp the appointment of all subordinate bishops, and other ecclesiastics of rank, to set vacant offices to sale, and make the reception from them of the badge of investiture, a requisite in order to consecration.³ Their example was followed by the

¹ Joannis viii. Epist. Frag. Labbei Concil. tom. xvii. p. 242.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xv. p. 437.

³ "To these evils Henry the emperor added another, which confirmed such as had prevailed before, and gave birth to those which rose afterwards; for he appointed bishops, not for their merits, according to the requirement of the canons, but for the payment of the largest sum of money, or the most forward adulation of his crimes; and after having given the episcopal office to a person, if another offered a higher price or louder flattery, he caused the former to be deposed for simony, and the other to be consecrated as a saint in his place."—N. Alexand. Hist. Eccl. sec. xii. tom. vi. p. 676. See also Van Espen, Jus. Canon. pr. i. p. 69.

monarchs of the other kingdoms, and the hierarchy of each reduced in that relation to an abject subjection to them. To extricate the papacy and other hierarchies from this thralldom, and gratify his boundless ambition and avarice, Gregory VII. formed, and in a large degree accomplished, the stupendous design of grasping with his own hands the vast power thus usurped by the princes, exalting the pontiff, not only to an independence of the emperors, but dominion over all civil rulers, and reducing the hierarchies to that subordination to the papacy for which the way had been prepared by the fabrications of Isidore.

The first step in this process was the investiture of the cardinals with the right of electing the pope, and the authorization of the pope to enter on his office, without waiting for the sanction of the emperor. It was decreed by a council assembled at Rome under Nicolas II. in 1059, "That the election of the Roman pontiff should be vested in the cardinal bishops, so that if any one were enthroned in the apostolical seat, without having first been harmoniously and canonically elected by them, and then approved by the subordinate religious orders, the clergy, and laics, he should not be regarded as pope or apostolical, but an apostate."¹ And Nicolas confirmed that canon. "We decree by the apostolic authority, that should any one be enthroned in the apostolic seat for money, through fear, or by a popular or military tumult, without a harmonious and canonical election and benediction by the cardinal bishops, and then the concurrence of the subordinate religious orders, he shall not be held to be pope, or apostolical, but an apostate, and it shall be lawful for the cardinals, with the religious who fear God, the clergy and laity, to expel the intruder from the apostolic seat, even with an anathema, and by force, and with zeal, and to appoint whom they shall judge worthy; and if they are unable to do it within the city, assembling by our apostolic authority without the city in whatever place they please, they may choose whoever they deem

"Wido, by divine grace archbishop of the church of Milan, to all the faithful in Christ, clergy and people of that church, eternal salvation. Your devotion, beloved brethren and children, is not ignorant how the reprobate and detestable practice of simony, condemned by all the canons, formerly prevailed in this church, and contaminated the souls of the innocent with its pestiferous leprosy; so that whoever entered the clerical order, by a settled rule, paid for a subdeaconship ten pieces, for a deaconship eighteen, and for the office of a presbyter twenty-four; so that in this way Simon Magus converted this holy Ambrosian church, as it were, into a shop of his perversity. That coiner and money-changer of iniquity had a bellows, hammers, and an anvil, and fabricated nothing else than the common peril of souls."—*Labbei Concil. tom. xix. p. 891.*

¹ *Labbei Concil. tom. xix. p. 897.*

the worthiest, and most advantageous for the apostolic seat, and give him authority to rule and direct affairs for the benefit of the holy Roman church, as seems best to him according to circumstances, as though he were already enthroned." "As the apostolic seat presides over all the churches of the world, and therefore cannot have a metropolitan over it, the cardinal bishops are without doubt to discharge the office of metropolitans, and induct the elect bishop into the apostolic seat. Let him, however, be chosen from the bosom of this church, if a suitable one be found. If no one be found in it, let him be taken from another, observing the honor, however, and reverence that are due to our beloved son Henry, who is now held to be king of the Romans, and is expected by divine permission hereafter to be emperor, as we have already conceded to him and to his successors, who may personally exact that right of the apostolic seat. Should unjust and evil men prevail to such a degree, that a pure, true, and free election cannot be made in the city, the cardinal bishops, with the religious, clergy, and Catholic laics, *although few*, shall have legitimate power to choose a pontiff wherever they may think proper to assemble; and after an election shall have been made, if a storm of war, or the malicious endeavors of men shall obstruct him who has been elected, so that he cannot be enthroned according to custom in the apostolic seat, the elect shall, nevertheless, have authority as the true pope, to govern the Roman church, and administer all its affairs.

"Should any one chosen against this decree, either through sedition, presumption, or any device, be ordained or enthroned, let him with his favorers and followers be separated by the authority of God and the holy apostles Peter and Paul from the threshold of God's holy church, and rejected as antichrist, an intruder, and a destroyer of Christianity; nor any hearing be reserved to him in respect to it, but let him be deprived, without a recall, of every ecclesiastical rank he before enjoyed, and let whoever adheres to him, or pays him any reverence whatever as a pontiff, or ventures in any respect to defend him, be bound by a like sentence."¹

By this provision, on the one hand, no one could be inducted into the papal chair by the mere will of the emperor or a faction; and on the other, whoever was elected by the cardinals and subordinate clergy, was authorized to assume the office, not only though exiled from the city, and prevented from being enthroned,

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xix. pp. 899, 903, 904.

but without the sanction of the emperor, unless he should personally demand that formality.

Next, as successor to St. Peter, the pontiff arrogated an absolute authority over all other bishops, and asserted that they drew their office from him, and were under obligation to render implicit obedience to his will.

Thus Gregory VII. through the first synod of Rome, in 1074 : “ Perhaps some one may be so delirious as to say that the subjects of a bishop can be condemned by him only, not by the Roman pontiff. But that is contradicted by the gospel, in which the prerogative is conferred on the blessed Peter as a prince among the apostles, in the promise whatsoever you bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven ; for he who subjects all generally to the apostolic power, in no way excepts the subject of any bishop. Whence the same apostle exacted obedience generally from the elders of his time, that is the presbyters or bishops, and from their subjects, inasmuch as in his epistles he addressed rules of life alike to inferiors and superiors, and to women as well as men, which had been idle had not all owed obedience to his injunctions. The blessed Anicletus, also ordained a presbyter by the prince of the apostles himself, testifies in his decrees,¹ ‘ The holy and apostolic Roman church obtained the primacy, not from the apostles, but from the Lord himself, inasmuch as he said to the blessed Peter, thou art Peter. Therefore this apostolical seat is constituted the hinge and head of all the churches by the Lord, and not by any one else ; and as a door is regulated by the hinge, so, by the Lord’s appointment, all churches are governed by the authority of this holy seat.’ The apostolic doctor, Gelasius, likewise :² ‘ The whole church, throughout the world, knows that the holy Roman church has the right of judging every other church, and that no one has authority to judge the Roman church, inasmuch as appeals are to be made to it from every part of the world, and no liberty is allowed of appeal from it. Moreover, the apostolical seat has the power, without the concurrence of a synod, of releasing whoever an unjust synod has condemned, and of condemning, without a synod, whoever it thinks proper ; and this, doubtless, by the sovereignty which Peter held by the word of the Lord, and always will hold. With these also concur the holy fathers, Callistus, Fabian, Sixtus, Sylvester, Julius,³ and many others, who were so attached to the truth that they would have preferred to

¹ They are forgeries.

² A forgery.

³ The decrees here referred to are all forgeries.

die rather than utter a falsehood. By virtue of this prerogative, accordingly, pope Simplicius entirely released Gregory, bishop of Modena, suffragan of the archbishop of Ravenna, from the dominion of that prelate, and because the archbishop had enthroned him against his will in the church of Modena. In like manner St. Gregory reduced Honoratus, archdeacon of Solona, who had then advanced from the archdeaconship to the rank of presbyter, to his former grade, against the will of the bishop, and deprived him also whom the bishop of Solona had ordained in his place. They, therefore, manifestly err, render themselves obnoxious to the authority of the apostle, and rashly judge against his power, when they imagine that the subjects of any bishop cannot be bound or loosed by the Roman pontiff, but only by their own priest.

“Moreover, the popes Leo, Vigil, and Gregory, each eminent in authority, testify in their decrees almost in the same language, that the holy Roman church bestows their office on other churches, so that they are called to a part in the care, but not to a plenitude of power; which shows clearly that no bishop has as great power given him over his own flock as the apostolical pontiff, who, although he distributes his care to the individual bishops, yet by no means divests himself of his universal and sovereign power; just as a king does not diminish his regal power by dividing his kingdom among different dukes, counts, or judges. As then the apostolical lord has such a sovereign power over every church, that even against the will of the bishop he may direct any thing in it according to the canons, who can deny that he can condemn everywhere throughout the nations, both the subjects of bishops and bishops themselves, who contemn the apostolical command?

“It is shown by these considerations, also, that the parishioner of a bishop ought to obey his apostolical lord rather than his own bishop, since the authority of his own is by no means adequate to release him from an apostolical condemnation if he is disobedient to the apostolical commands; while, on the other hand, the apostolical lord, if he obey him, can, with the utmost ease, protect him from all injury by his bishop, either by wholly releasing the parishioner from his dominion, or by restraining the bishop from injustice through a rebuke or condemnation by apostolical authority. The subject of a bishop should, indeed, take care not to obey his own bishop in any respect contrary to the apostolical commands, since St. Gregory deprived the archdeacon of Solona, appointed in the place of Honoratus, because he

obeyed his own bishop in being ordained in his place after a prohibition by the apostolic seat. Hence, also, it is seen how manifestly they err who say that the subjects of a bishop ought not by any means to obey the apostolic seat if they would obey their own priest; since he was degraded, and deservedly, by St. Gregory, who was shown, by obedience to his own bishop, to have been opposed to the apostolic seat. Indeed, no one can show a due obedience to his own bishop who does not endeavor primarily to obey the apostolic seat. For, every one who desires to be a bishop, should especially teach his people that they should, without contradiction, obey the canons of the holy fathers, which, as has already been said, enjoin on all a supreme obedience to the apostolic seat. Whoever then would render an appropriate obedience to his own legitimate pastor, must also study to render a supreme obedience to the apostolic lord."¹

Gregory VII., in like manner, in his dictates, asserts that the Roman pontiff might of right be called universal, that he could, without the concurrence of a synod, depose bishops and reconcile them, and that he had authority to institute new laws according to the exigency of the times.²

He thus claimed the most absolute supremacy over the church, as monarch, lawgiver, and judge. He taught that all other bishops and clergy drew their authority from him, held their office by his will, and might be deprived, suspended, or deposed at his pleasure. He held that they had no authority over their people except in subordination to him, that their parishioners owed them no obedience except in subjection to him, and that they were under the highest obligation to disobey them, when their commands were at variance with his dictates; and finally, he denied that he was under any responsibility to the church for the manner in which he exercised his power.

Thirdly. He asserted the right of the church to elect and institute its pastors and bishops, independently of the civil rulers; and accused the emperors and other monarchs of violating its liberties, in usurping the appointment and introduction of bishops and other ecclesiastics into their offices.

He accordingly induced a Roman synod to decree, "that as often as the pastor of a church died, and another was to be instituted in his place, at the direction of the visiting bishop sent to it from the apostolical or metropolitan seat, the clergy and people, setting all worldly ambition, fear, and favor aside, should, with the consent of the pope or the metropolitan of the church,

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 429-436.

² Ibid. 168, 169.

elect a pastor for itself according to God ; and that if it should presume to do otherwise, it should derive no benefit from the election wrongly made, nor have authority to make another, but the whole power of election should be at the disposal of the apostolic seat, or the metropolitan."¹

He prohibited the reception of investiture from princes and laymen. "If any one hereafter receive the episcopate or abbotship from the hand of any laic, he shall not be held to be a bishop or abbot. We, moreover, debar him from the favor of the blessed Peter, and from entering the church to serve in the place which he obtained by ambition and disobedience, which is idolatry. We ordain the same also in regard to inferior ecclesiastical offices. Also if any emperor, duke, marquis, count, or any other secular officer or person, ventures to give an investiture of the episcopate or any other ecclesiastical dignity, let him know that he is bound by the bond of the same sentence."²

He prohibited likewise the purchase and sale of ecclesiastical offices. "If any one shall sell prebends, archdeaconships, or any ecclesiastical offices, or ordain in any other manner than the statutes of the holy fathers direct, let him be suspended from his office."

"Ordinations which are made for money, because of solicitation, or through subservience to any one, or which are not made with the concurrence of the clergy and people according to the canons, and the approbation of those to whom the consecration belongs, we adjudge to be invalid and without authority."³

Fourthly. He enforced these decrees, and all other canons on ecclesiastics and laics of every rank throughout the empire, by the penalties of deposition and excommunication.

"Sigefrid, archbishop of Mentz, who attempted to separate archbishops and abbots of Germany from their spiritual mother the holy Roman church, we, by the judgment of the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the apostles Peter and Paul, suspend from the episcopal office, and debar from the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, unless the peril of death intervenes and he repent. Others also, who have voluntarily united in his schism, and persist in that wickedness, we suspend in like manner from the episcopal office.

"The bishops of Lombardy, who, contemning the canonical and apostolical authority, have conspired against the blessed Peter the prince of the Apostles, we, by the authority of Peter,

¹ Rom. Concil. vii. can. vi. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 533.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 431, 509, 517.

³ Ibid. 509.

suspend wholly from the episcopal office, and separate from the communion of the holy church. We excommunicate Berenger, bishop of Agde, because he communicated with the bishop of Narbonne when under excommunication, and performed episcopal offices for him. We excommunicate Heriman, bishop of Vienne, justly deposed for simony, perjury, sacrilege, and apostasy, because he persists in harassing the church of Vienne, and we prohibit divine service in the churches of Romans and St. Irenæus of Lyons as long as he has possession of them."¹

Fifthly. He summoned ecclesiastics, princes, and persons of all ranks, from every part of the empire to Rome, to answer to him for their violations of his decrees, and submit their contests with one another to his decision; assumed the right of judging their causes; and punished them, if they refused submission to his dictates, with excommunication and anathemas.

"Philip, king of France, being strongly attached to you, has urgently requested us both by letters and ambassadors to absolve you, which we saw we could not consistently do, as we know, according to the canons, you ought to be far more severely censured. However, postponing in apostolical compassion the avenging sentence which is your due, we hereby command you by all means to present yourself before us at the approaching festival of All Saints, that we may determine justly the complaints so often repeated against you of the church of Chalons, and admonish you in the mean time not to render yourself by contempt or disobedience still more obnoxious to the sentence already pronounced. If you disobey us in respect to these commands, and artfully excusing yourself, fail to appear before us within the appointed time, you need not doubt any further that you will be condemned, and irrevocably deposed."²

Sixthly. He usurped the investiture of the superior prelates, by denying them the right of entering on their office, though canonically chosen and constituted, until he had bestowed on them the pall.

"To William, archbishop of Rouen. The letters you have sent to us pretend a sufficient regard, but there is no evidence whatever of its sincerity, since were it real, you would not, like your suffragans, for so long a time have attached little importance to visiting the threshold of the apostles; for we do not recollect to have seen any one of you from the time that the divine condescension advanced us, though unworthy, to the care of this

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 467, 468.

² Gregorii VII. Epist. 56. lib. i. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 104, 105.

seat; which, however, was not much to be expected, as you have taken little pains to visit our legates who are near you. But what labor, what extraordinary difficulty, has induced you for such a period to neglect the blessed Peter, when from the ends of the world, nations newly converted to the faith endeavor, women as well as men, annually to visit him? Unless apostolic mildness withholds us, you will find it still more seriously censured in you, that you have hitherto put off obtaining from the apostolic seat, according to custom, the most honorable badge of your dignity, the pall. For we presume you are not ignorant how strictly the rule of the holy fathers ordains that they shall be condemned, who for three months from their consecration, neglect to obtain the pall which belongs to their office. As therefore you have slighted the canon of the holy fathers, we command you by the apostolic authority, not to venture hereafter to ordain a bishop or priest, or consecrate churches, until you have obtained from this seat that which is lacking to your honor, the pall. We admonish you and your suffragans anew that you take care forthwith to remedy the aforesaid defect, lest if you continue negligent as hitherto, you experience for the contempt the power of the blessed Peter through us, with a severity greater in proportion to the delay."¹

Seventhly. But beyond these assumptions of authority over ecclesiastics, he claimed, as the vicar of Christ, a supremacy also over all princes, and power to excommunicate them, deprive them of their crowns, absolve their subjects from allegiance, and bestow their kingdoms on whoever he pleased; a claim which Catholics themselves acknowledge had never been advanced by any other pope.

"If the holy apostolical seat, divinely invested with sovereign power, judges spiritual things, why not also secular? But, perhaps it may be thought that the regal dignity is superior to the episcopal. How much they differ may be seen from their origin. The pride of men invented the regal; the episcopal was instituted by the divine benignity. That incessantly grasps at vain-glory; this aspires continually to the heavenly life. If you compare the episcopal honor and sublimity, to the splendor of kings and the diadem of princes, the latter are as inferior as lead to gold."²

"Who doubts that the priests of Christ are the fathers and masters of kings, princes, and all believers? And would it not

¹ Gregorii VII. Epist. i. lib. ix. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 339.

² Gregorii VII. Epist. ii. lib. iv. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 209.

be acknowledged as a wretched insanity, if a son should attempt to subjugate a father to himself, or a disciple a master, and subject him to his power by unjust obligations, by whom it is believed he may be bound, and bound not only on earth but in heaven?"¹

"The holy fathers, receiving with great veneration and preserving this prerogative, sovereignly conferred on the blessed Peter the prince of the apostles by a heavenly decree, in their general councils and other writings and acts, denominated the holy Roman church the Universal Mother, and received evidences of it in doctrinal decrees for the confirmation of the faith and judicial decisions, agreeing in this with one voice, that all great affairs, and especially the judgment of all ecclesiastical causes, should be referred to it as the mother and head, and that no one should or can appeal from it, nor reverse or reconsider its decisions."²

"O blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, incline, I pray, your gracious ears, and hear me thy servant, whom thou hast nourished from infancy, and freed thus far from the hands of the wicked who have hated and hate me for my fidelity to thee. Thou art my witness, and my queen the mother of God, and the blessed Paul thy brother, and all thy saints, that thy holy Roman church drew me reluctant to its government, and I did not regard it robbery to ascend thy seat, and would rather finish my life in a pilgrimage than usurp thy place in a secular spirit for worldly glory. And therefore I believe it pleases and has pleased thee of thy grace, and not of my works, that the Christian people specially committed to thee should obey me, and that to me especially in thy stead is intrusted the power given by God of binding and loosing in heaven and earth. Relying therefore on this conviction for the honor and defence of thy church, in behalf of the omnipotent God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and by thy power and authority, I divest King Henry, son of Henry the emperor, who has risen against thy church with unexampled pride, of the government of the kingdoms of Germany and Italy; and absolve all Christians from the obligation of the oath which they have sworn, or shall swear to him; and command that no one should serve him as king: for it is right that he who studies to lessen the honor of the church, should himself lose the honors which he possesses. And inasmuch as he disdained obedience as a Christian, and did not return to the Lord whom he had forsaken, but participated with the excom-

¹ Gregorii VII. Epist. xxi. lib. viii. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 333.

² Gregorii VII. Epist. xxi. lib. iv. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 332.

municated, contrary to the command which I sent to him, thou art a witness, for his salvation, and endeavored to rend thy church by separating himself from it; as thy vicar, I bind him in the bond of an anathema, that the nations may know and confess that thou art Peter, and that on thy rock the Son of the living God has built the church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹

He prohibited the bishops from releasing him from this excommunication, except with the concurrence of the pontiff. "We command that no one of you presume to absolve him from this excommunication, until you have apprized the apostolic seat of his reformation, and received its consent."²

He directed the bishops, dukes, counts, and other princes of rank, to elect another emperor in his place, should it prove necessary. "If he should not heartily turn to God, we enjoin that one be selected for the government of the kingdom, who will give satisfactory pledges that he will observe the conditions which I have mentioned, and such others as are requisite to the safety of the church and the empire; and should that be necessary, in order that we may confirm the election and ratify the new institution, make the transaction known to us as soon as possible, the person and his manners, that proceeding with a holy and beneficent purpose, you may merit through divine grace the favor of the apostolic seat, and the benediction, in all respects, of the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles."³

He again deposed him in 1076, and conferred the empire on Rodulph, who had been chosen in his stead. "Again, in the behalf of the omnipotent God and the blessed Peter, interdicting to him the kingdoms of Germany and Italy, I divest him of all regal power and dignity, forbid that any Christian should obey him as king, absolve all who have sworn allegiance to him from their oaths, and ordain that he and his favorers shall have no power in battle, nor victory in this life. Moreover, that Rodulph, whom the Germans have chosen as their king, may sway and defend the German empire in fidelity to you, I, on your behalf, give and grant absolution from all their sins to all who faithfully adhere to him, and your benediction in this life and that which is to come; for as Henry is justly divested of the imperial dignity because of his pride, rebellion, and treachery, so the power and dignity of the empire are bestowed on Rodulph for his humility, obedience, and truth."⁴

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 468, 469.

² Ibid. tom. i. p. 27.

³ Bullar. Mag. tom. i. p. 27.

⁴ Ibid. tom. i. p. 29.

He and his successors deposed several other kings also and princes. In addition to these assumptions of authority over princes, he claimed that emperors and kings were vassals of his throne, bound to acknowledge him as their superior, swear to him allegiance, and hold their dominions in dependence on him. "To Alphonsus, king of Arragon : We give thanks to the Almighty, who sheds splendor over your glory by the grace of his presence, uniting you by faith and devotion to the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, to whom he subjected all the principalities and powers of the world, by giving him the right of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth."¹

He accordingly claimed Hungary as a dependence of the Romish church. "To Geusa, duke of Hungary : We believe it is known to you that the kingdom of Hungary ought, like other noble kingdoms, to be free, and subject to no king of another kingdom, but only to the holy universal mother, the Roman church, which regards subjects, not as servants, but receives all as sons. But the divine displeasure has obstructed the dominion of it, I believe, because your relative obtained it by usurpation from the emperor of Germany, not from the Roman pontiffs. Since, however, it is in your hands, we expect you to take care of the churches, to show a supreme concern for religion, and to render such obedience to the legates of the holy Roman church when they come to you, as may aid you, through the intercessions of the blessed Peter, to glory and honor in this life and that which is to come."²

"We are anxious to procure peace, if possible, between you and your relative king Solomon, so that justice may be maintained, that each may be satisfied with what is his, and not pass the bounds of rectitude and good usage, and that thence the kingdom, which has hitherto flourished chiefly by your means, may become such, that its king shall not be a secondary monarch. For when the sovereignty of the blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, was contemned, whose kingdom it is, we believe your prudence is aware, the king subjected himself to the German emperor, and obtained the title of vice-king. But the Lord providing against the injury done to his prince, by his fiat transferred the control of the kingdom to you. And so if he had before any right to the kingdom, he deprived himself of it by that sacrilegious usurpation."³

¹ Gregorii vii. Epist. vi. lib. vii. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 292.

² Gregorii vii. Epist. lxxiii. lib. ii. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 174.

³ Gregorii vii. Epist. lxx. lib. ii. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 180.

He professed to bestow the throne of Russia on the heir to that monarchy. "To Demetrius king of Russia : Your son visiting the threshold of the apostles, came to us, desiring to receive your kingdom by the gift of St. Peter through our hands ; and promising due fidelity to the blessed Peter the prince of the apostles, earnestly solicited it, affirming that without doubt his request would be ratified and confirmed by you, if it were granted by the grace and authority of the apostolic seat. And as his vows and requests seemed reasonable, both from your consent and his earnestness, we have at length assented to them, and delivered to him, in behalf of St. Peter, the government of your kingdom."¹

He claimed Spain also as a dependence of St. Peter. "To the king, counts, and other princes of Spain : We trust your wisdom is not ignorant that the holy and apostolical seat is the head and universal mother of all churches and nations, which the divine clemency foreordained to come to the knowledge of his name by the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through the evangelic and apostolical doctrine."

"Moreover, we wish it to be made known to you,—which indeed it is not agreeable to us to do, but is highly necessary to you, not only for your future, but your present glory,—that the kingdom of Spain was by ancient treaties made over in right and propriety, to the blessed Peter and the holy Roman church."²

He made similar claims on other princes, and drew several of them to an acknowledgment of subordination to him, and exacted from them an oath of allegiance. He extorted the following pledge of subservience from the emperor of Germany : "I will from this hour be true, by a genuine fidelity, to the apostle Peter and his vicar pope Gregory, and whatever the pope commands me in the words,—by a true obedience,—I will as becomes a Christian faithfully observe."³

He induced Bertrannus, count of Provence, to surrender to him his dominions, and swear to him allegiance : "I, Bertrannus, by the grace of God count of Provence, for the remission of my sins and those of my parents, present, give, and grant, my whole prerogative, as far as it pertains to me by the right of my parents, to Almighty God, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to my lord Gregory VII. the pope, and all his successors, so that whatever hereafter pleases the lord pope Gregory respecting me

¹ Gregorii vii. Epist. lxxiv. lib. ii. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 183.

² Gregorii vii. Epist. xxviii. lib. iv. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 234, 235.

³ Gregorii vii. Epist. iii. lib. ix. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 343.

and my prerogative, I will, without contradiction, do. All the churches which are in my possession, I will yield wholly to my lord Gregory the pope aforesaid, and all his successors, and will aid, as far as I am able, in governing them justly, and according to the divine will."

"I, Bertrannus, by the grace of God count of Provence, will from this time be faithful to you my lord pope Gregory, and all your successors who shall be chosen through the superior cardinals of the holy Roman church, and nothing which you intrust to me will I knowingly reveal to your injury. So may God help me, and these holy gospels."¹

The structure, in the erection of which his predecessors had labored nearly three centuries, and which he had suddenly advanced to such a towering height, was soon completed by those who followed him, by procuring the surrendry by the emperors of the right of investiture to the pontiff, the usurpation from the clergy and people of the appointment of bishops and other ecclesiastics, the transference by appeal of all ecclesiastical causes to Rome for decision, and the formal submission of the church to all these arrogations of authority.

The emperor, in 1122, relinquished all investitures to the pope: "I, Henry, emperor of the Romans, for the love of God, the holy Roman church, and lord pope Calistus, and for the help of my soul, reserve to God and to his holy apostles Peter and Paul and the holy Catholic church, all investitures by the ring and crosier, and grant that in all the churches which are in my kingdom and empire, a canonical election may be made, and a free consecration. The possessions and regalia of the blessed Peter which I have, that have been usurped from the commencement of this quarrel to the present time, whether during my father's reign or mine, I will restore to the holy Roman church, and will aid in the restoration of those which are not in my hands. The possessions also of all other churches and princes, and others, whether ecclesiastics or laics, which I hold, I will restore according to the judgment of the princes, and to justice, and will faithfully assist in the restoration of those which I do not hold."²

The election of bishops began in the twelfth century to be withdrawn from the clergy of the dioceses, and assumed by those of the cathedrals;³ but the pontiffs soon usurped their appointment, and at length reserved to themselves the disposition of

¹ Gregorii vii. Epist. xii. lib. ix. Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 350.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xxi. pp. 273, 274.

³ Van Espen Jus. Canon. pr. i. tit. xiii. p. 65. Febronii de Statu Eccl. c. vii. s. iv.

all lucrative ecclesiastical offices throughout the empire. Alexander III., who held the papal sceptre from 1159 to 1181, "in fulfilment of the apostolic office which required him to provide for those ecclesiastics who had no benefices," ordered the abbot and chapter of St. Remigius to bestow a satisfactory one on the bearer of his letter.¹ Many such commands were issued by the pontiffs that followed, till, in 1295, Boniface VIII. reserved the appropriation of all vacant benefices to the apostolic seat. "We are obliged in our pious solicitude to take care that dignities, prebends, and all other ecclesiastical benefices, with or without care, which are known at the apostolic seat to be vacant, should be bestowed on competent persons, by whom the obedience that is due may be rendered in them, and the divine service conducted with care. All dignities, therefore, of that kind, prebends, churches, and other ecclesiastical benefices, which at this seat shall be cited in court, within one month from this date and thereafter, we reserve by apostolic authority to be filled by this seat, and decree that whatever shall hereafter be otherwise attempted by any one, whoever he may be, either by a prelate or any other authority, shall be invalid."²

In like manner, Clement V. in 1305: "Moved by this consideration, the church especially of Bordeaux, and monastery of the holy cross of that city also, vacant by the death of the abbot, and generally patriarchal, archiepiscopal, episcopal churches, monasteries, priories, and all ranks, dignities, or offices, of whatever order or condition they are, and also canonries, prebends, churches, with or without care, and all other ecclesiastical benefices, by whatever name they are called, which are known at the apostolic seat to be vacant, and which shall become vacant during our pontificate, we reserve by apostolic authority to be appropriated and filled by our appointment."³

Appeals to the court of Rome, which through the arts of the pontiffs had become frequent as early as the ninth century,⁴ they in the twelfth succeeded in rendering general, not only in great causes, but those of little importance. Thus pope Alexander III. to the archbishop of Rheims: "As the holy Roman church is by the divine disposal constituted the head and mistress of all churches, and consultations and causes are referred to it from different parts of the world, we are pleased that you ask counsel in

¹ Alexandri Epist. xliiii. append. i. Labbei Concil. tom. xxi. p. 951.

² Decret. Extravag. lib. iii. tit. ii. c. i. p. 1170.

³ Ibid. c. iii. p. 1171.

⁴ Labbei Concil. tom. xv. pp. 436-440. Febronii de Statu Eccl. c. iii. s. 7.

respect to various questions of right, and commend your prudence."¹

"In regard to appeals in inferior causes, we wish you to hold that they are to be carried in whatever causes they are made, however slight they may be, not less than when made in the greater."²

By this means the interests of all ecclesiastical litigants throughout the empire were placed at the disposal of the court of Rome, and all the motives of poverty and wealth, degradation and honor, fear and hope, to which men are accessible who are struggling with each other for property, office, and rank, employed to reduce all classes to a servile submission to the Roman see.

And finally, this supremacy of the pontiff over the whole church, was formally admitted and asserted by the church itself, and an acknowledgment of his assumed authority, and a promise of obedience to him, made conditions of admission to ecclesiastical offices.

The doctrine of his supremacy was introduced into the canons by a forged letter of Calixtus I. "It does not become the members to depart from the head. Instead, according to the Scriptures, all the members should follow the head. But there is no doubt that the apostolic church is the mother of all churches, from whose laws you can by no means with propriety deviate. Even as the Son of God came to do the will of the Father, so you also should fulfil the will of your mother, which is the church, the head of which is the Roman church. Nothing, therefore, can be regarded as legitimate, that is done contrary to her discipline."³

The fourth Lateran council also, under Innocent III. in 1215 : "Ratifying the ancient prerogatives of the patriarchal seats, with the approbation of this holy universal synod, we ordain that after the Roman church, which by divine appointment as the mother and mistress of all the faithful of Christ, holds supreme authority over all others ; the Constantinopolitan church shall obtain the first, the Alexandrian the second, that of Antioch the third, and that of Jerusalem the fourth place ; its proper dignity being preserved to each, so that after their prelates shall have received from the Roman pontiff the pall, which is the badge of the plenitude of pontifical power, and sworn to him fidelity and obedience, they may lawfully give the pall to their suffragans,

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xxi. p. 1079. Decret. Gregorii ix. lib. ii. tit. xxviii. c. 5.

² Decret. Gregorii ix. lib. ii. tit. xxviii. c. 11.

³ Decret. Gratiani Dist. xii. c. i.

receiving from them, on his behalf, a profession conformable to the canons, and promise of obedience to the Roman church."¹

So also the councils of Basle and Florence. "We likewise declare that the holy apostolic seat and the Roman pontiff, have the primacy over the whole world; and the Roman pontiff is the successor of the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, and the true vicar of Christ, the head of the whole church, and the father and teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given him by our Lord Jesus Christ in the blessed Peter, of binding, ruling, and governing the universal church."²

And at length, by the bull of Pius IV., all who were introduced into the sacred office, were required to acknowledge "the holy Catholic and apostolic Roman church, as the mother and mistress of all churches, and promise a true obedience to the Roman pontiff, the successor of the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ."³

He has thus been owned as the supreme head of the whole Catholic church for more than six hundred years, and the acknowledgment of him in that relation has been made the great test in that communion of orthodoxy. They who ventured during that period to deny his authority over all the hierarchies, and reject his decrees as a usurpation, rendered themselves more obnoxious than by any other act to the pontifical anathema, and the forfeitures, tortures, and death, which were for ages inflicted on all who resisted his claims. "That no one may venture to deny that the pontiff has those prerogatives, they excite a fear of the crime of sacrilege, saying, 'It is sacrilege to dispute the power of the pope, for the pope is the cause of causes. No inquiry therefore is to be made in regard to his power, as there can be no cause of the first cause.' Can a higher earthly sovereignty be conceived than that of the pope, as falsely represented by these authors. Scarce a politician can be found, who ascribes greater power to the most absolute despotism."⁴

Thus by these successive steps, after a struggle of more than four centuries, the ecclesiastics of all the hierarchies in the empire, were united in one vast organization, with the pontiff as their supreme legislative and judicial head, and a single ecclesiastical government established over the whole Roman church, after the model of the civil government of the ancient empire under Constantine and his successors. It is, accordingly, de-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. pp. 990, 991.

² Ibid. tom. xxxi. p. 1031.

³ Concil. Trident. edit. Lips. 1839, p. 111. Febronii de Stat. Eccl. c. ii. Belarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. ii. c. xiii. p. 63.

⁴ Febronii de Statu Eccl. prefat.

nominated by Catholics themselves a monarchy. "All Catholic doctors agree in this, that the ecclesiastical government committed to men by God is a monarchy."¹ Bellarmine devotes his first book "of the Pontiff," to prove that such is and ought to be its government. "If the monarchical is the best form of government, as we have shown, and it is certain that the church of God instituted by Christ its head, who is supremely wise, ought to be governed in the best manner, who can deny that its rule ought to be monarchical?"²

The canonists are accustomed accordingly to denominate the pope a king. "The pope may be called a king. He is the prince of princes, and lord of lords. He is as it were a God on earth. He is above right, superior to law, superior to the canons. He can do all things against right, and without right. He is greater than all the saints except Peter. Some say he is greater than an apostle, and not bound by the commands either of Peter or Paul. His sentence prevails against the judgment of the whole world. His sole will is instead of reason in the bestowment of ecclesiastical offices. He does not commit simony in selling benefices. He may deprive any one of his office, without any cause. He is able to free from obligation in matters of positive right, without any cause, and they who are so released are safe in respect to God. He can take away a possession from one church, and give it to another, even without a cause; and no one can say to him, Why doest thou so? He is not bound by treaties. The pope and Christ make one consistory. He can make justice of injustice. He can change the substance of things, and make a thing out of nothing. He can change squares into circles."³

The pontiffs were as absolutely the legislative and judicial head of this ecclesiastical kingdom, as the emperors from Constantine to Augustulus were of the civil empire, and imposed whatever laws they pleased on subordinate ecclesiastics and on the church by decrees, in the same manner as those emperors enacted laws by edicts. The decrees, bulls of canonization, sentences, charters, and other legislative and judicial acts of the pontiffs, from Gregory VII. in 1073, to Benedict XIV. in 1757, collected in the *Bullarium Magnum*, fill nineteen folios. Many others are contained in the decretals and councils.

They appointed to all ecclesiastical offices throughout the empire, as the Christian emperors appointed to all civil and military offices in their dominions.

¹ Bellarmini de Rom. Pont. lib. i. c. v.

² *Ibid.* lib. i. c. ix. p. 527.

³ Febronii de Statu Eccl. præf.

“The canonists held, that ‘the bishops are not the immediate vicars of Christ, but only of the pope. All ecclesiastical jurisdiction resides alone in the pope, in the same manner as the whole civil power resides in the emperors who now reign as absolute monarchs. All bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs, are his mere officials. The pope fills the lowest offices through the plebeians and other inferiors, the intermediate through the bishops, and the highest himself. Bishops are not necessary to individual churches. All offices may be filled by prelates invested with a quasi episcopal jurisdiction. The sacrament of confirmation may everywhere be delegated by the supreme pontiff to simple priests, for whose ordination it is sufficient sometimes that any bishop comes from abroad. If that is done, the divine law will be satisfied’— And the doctrine results naturally from the monarchy ascribed to the pope, and universal pontificate, having the whole world as a diocese, as defined by the courtiers.”¹

They exacted oaths of fidelity from all whom they advanced to important offices; as the emperors exacted engagements of fidelity from their civil magistrates. Archbishops and other prelates swore fidelity in the following terms. “I will from this hour, above all, be faithful to the blessed Peter and pope Gregory VII. and their successors, who are elected by the superior cardinals. I will not do any thing by counsel or act to deprive them of life, limb, or the papacy, or that they may be caught at a disadvantage. The synod to which they shall call me, either by messengers or letters, I will attend and canonically obey; or if not able, will send my representative. I will give my aid to retain and defend the Roman papacy, and the regal insignia and prerogatives of St. Peter, as far as is consistent with the maintenance of my own rank and rights. The counsels which they intrust to me, either themselves or through their legates or letters, I will not reveal to any one knowingly to their injury. I will treat the Roman legate in coming and going with honor, and aid in his necessities. I will not communicate knowingly with those whom they excommunicate by name. I will faithfully aid the Roman church with secular troops when I shall be requested. All these I will observe, except so far as exempted by their express license.”²

They established courts in which all violations of their laws were tried, and a tribunal at the capital for the decision of appeals. There were gradations of rank in the hierarchy, like those of the magistrates of the civil empire. The hierarchies, as na-

¹ Febronii de Statu Eccl. præf.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xx. pp. 525, 526.

tionalized by Constantine, were formed in each patriarchate, after the model of the civil government in the provinces. The hierarchy of the western kingdoms under the pope, was formed after that pattern; having archbishops or metropolitans at the head of the clergy of each nation, or large district, and bishops, abbots, and a long catalogue of subordinate ranks, under each metropolitan.

They levied taxes for their support on ecclesiastics and laics. An annual tribute, under the name of Peter-pence, was paid by the English for several centuries.¹ A similar tax was demanded by Gregory VII. of France, but not paid. "Let all Gaul be informed that every family should pay at least one penny annually to the blessed Peter, and acknowledge him as their father and master in the ancient manner."² They reserved to themselves a year's income of all vacant benefices, extorted vast sums from the superior prelates for the pall, exacted a price for all ecclesiastical offices in their gift, and drew immense revenues from the ignorant and superstitious, by the sale of indulgences and masses, and the promise of forgiveness to those who presented offerings at the shrines of martyrs, and visited the churches of the capital with gifts at the jubilees.

They inflicted ecclesiastical penalties on the violators of their laws;—exclusion from communion, suspension from office, deposition, excommunication, and a sentence to eternal death.

This vast hierarchy was thus, in all its great features, a counterpart to the imperial rule under the Christian emperors, and is most appropriately denominated an image of the wild beast that received the death-wound and lived.

Its authors, the influences by which they were prompted, and the period of its erection, were also in conformity with the representation of the vision. It was erected subsequently to the gift to the pope of a civil dominion, and after he became invested with his second horn. The edict of Constantine conferring a civil dominion on the pontiff, which was one of the forged documents employed to induce the inhabitants of the earth to erect the image, was fabricated between the repulse of the Lombards by Pepin in 755, and the gift of their territory to the pope by Charlemagne in 773; as from the representation of Hadrian I., it is apparent that it was used on that occasion to induce the French monarch to yield to the claims of the pontiff, and con-

¹ Lingard's Hist. England, vol. ii. chap. 1, p. 105.

² Gregorii VII. Epist. 23, lib. viii. Labbei Council. tom. xx. p. 338. Mosheim, Hist. Ch. cent. xi. p. ii. c. 2.

firm him in the possession of his territories as a civil prince.¹ It is probable that the whole series of false letters, ascribed by Isidore to the early pontiffs, which were the great instrument by which the princes and bishops of the nations were induced to yield the prerogatives arrogated by the pontiff, were forged during that period. They were first published during the reign of Charlemagne, became extensively known before the middle of the ninth century, and ere the close of that age, were generally received as authentic, and treated as part of the canon law.²

VIII. It was at the instigation and demand of the pontiffs that the princes, clergy, and people out of the papal territory, submitted their hierarchies, which had before been independent, to the jurisdiction of the pope, and exalted him to the power of an ecclesiastical monarch over them. The scheme was originated by the pontiffs, and pursued and accomplished by their arts, against a powerful opposition, not only from the emperors of Germany, and kings of England and France, but also from many of their great prelates.

IX. And finally, the image was erected by the inhabitants of the earth, the princes, ecclesiastics, and people of the kingdoms exterior to the papal territory, not by the pontiffs themselves. They had no power by their mere will to alter the constitution of the hierarchies of those kingdoms. It was not till they had become invested with the prerogatives of an ecclesiastical despotism, that they could exert that power. They derived it from the official acts of the princes and prelates, and the assent of the people. The monarchs surrendered to them the right of investiture, the prelates sanctioned that gift, they acquiesced in their reservation to themselves of vacant benefices and other arrogations, and enforced on their subjects, by civil penalties, the decrees, canons, and judicial sentences of the pontiffs, as the head of the Catholic church.

X. The popes thus exalted to supreme power over the church of the ten kingdoms, caused that as many as would not worship the hierarchy of which they were the head, should be put to death.

Dissent from the faith and worship of the Catholic church, and a denial of the right of the pontiff to legislate over the laws of God, were made by the popes and councils capital offences, and all who were convicted of them were delivered to the civil magistrates, and punished, if incorrigible, with death. "We shall

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. ii. p. 607 ; tom. xii. pp. 820, 821.

² S. Baluzii Præf. ad Dial. Ant. August. de Emend. Grat.—Petri de Marca, Concord. Sacerd. et Imp. lib. iii. c. v. ; lib. vii. c. xx.

show," says Bellarmine, "that incorrigible heretics, and especially the relapsed, may and ought to be rejected by the church, and punished by the secular powers with temporal penalties, and also with death." Lucius III. and Innocent III., by formal decrees, required them to be seized, condemned, and delivered by the bishops to the civil magistrates, to be capitally punished, and enjoined the princes and magistrates to execute on them the sentences denounced by the canon and civil laws. "Supported by the presence and energy of our beloved son Frederick, the illustrious emperor of the Romans, by the council of our brethren, other patriarchs, archbishops also, and numerous princes, who have assembled from different parts of the world, we rise by this decree against all heretics, and by apostolical authority condemn every sect, by whatever name it is designated.

"In the first place, therefore, we subject the Cathari, the Patari, the Poor Men of Lyons, the Passagini, and the Arnaldists, to a perpetual anathema; and as some claim authority to preach, although the apostle says, 'How can they preach except they be sent?' all who venture to preach, either publicly or privately, without authority from the apostolic seat, or the bishop of the place; and all who dare to think and teach otherwise in respect to the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, or baptism, or the remission of sins, or matrimony, or the other sacraments of the church, than the holy Roman church preaches and practices; and generally, all whom the Roman church, or individual bishops in their dioceses, or the clergy themselves, when the seat is vacant, with the concurrence, if necessary, of the neighboring bishops, shall judge to be heretics, shall be bound with the same bond of a perpetual anathema. All their harborers, and defenders, and all who yield them any patronage or favor, we consign to the same sentence.

"And as it sometimes happens that the severity of ecclesiastical discipline is condemned by those who do not understand its virtue, we ordain that clergymen who are clearly convicted of the aforesaid errors, shall be divested of the prerogatives of their order, deprived of their benefices, and delivered to the secular power to be appropriately punished, unless, immediately on the detection of their error, they voluntarily return to the Catholic faith, and consent publicly, at the will of the bishop of the diocese, to abjure their heresy, and make a proper satisfaction. But a laic, who is infected with that pest, unless abjuring the heresy and making satisfaction, he instantly flies to the orthodox faith,

¹ Bellarmini de Laicis, tom. ii. p. 548

is to be left to the will of the secular power to suffer a vengeance in correspondence with his crime. They moreover who shall be found marked by the mere suspicion of the church, unless they demonstrate their innocence in a manner suited to the nature of the suspicion, and to their rank, shall be subjected to the same sentence. But they who after having abjured their error, or cleared themselves in a trial by their bishop, shall be convicted of relapsing to the heresy they have abjured, we order to be left to the severest sentence without any further hearing, and their goods appropriated to the churches which they served, according to the canons.

“We add, moreover, by the advice of the bishops, and at the suggestion of the emperor and his princes, that each archbishop and bishop shall himself, or by his archdeacon, or other honest and suitable persons, once or twice a year, go through the parish in which it is reported that heretics reside, and compel three or more men there of good reputation, or the whole population if it seem expedient, to swear that should any one know persons who are heretics, or any who hold secret assemblies, or differ in life or manners from the usage of the faithful, he will endeavor to point them out to the bishop or archdeacon. And the bishop or archdeacon shall call the accused before him, and, unless they clear themselves to his satisfaction, or should they, after having cleared themselves, relapse to their former heresy, they are to be punished according to his judgment.

“If, from a superstitious objection to oaths, any of them should refuse to swear, they are on that account to be adjudged heretics, and smitten with the punishment which has been mentioned.

“We enact, moreover, that counts, barons, prefects, and consuls of cities and other places, at the admonition of the archbishops and bishops, promise under oath, that whenever they shall be required by them, they will boldly and efficiently aid the church against heretics and their accomplices, and study in good faith, according to their duty and power, to execute in the cases of which we have spoken, the ecclesiastical in the same manner as the imperial laws. And should they refuse to observe their oath, they shall be divested of the offices which they enjoy and become ineligible to others. They shall, moreover, be excommunicated, and their lands put under an interdict of the church. A city that excites resistance to these decrees, or neglects at the admonition of the bishop to punish those who resist, shall be deprived of the commerce of other cities, and divested of its episcopal rank.

“All favorers also of heretics, as condemned to perpetual infamy, we order to be debarred from the office of advocates, from giving testimony, and from all civil employments. If they are persons who are exempt from the jurisdiction of bishops, and subject only to the power of the apostolic seat, they are nevertheless to be subject, in respect to these statutes against heretics, to the judgment of the archbishops and bishops, and notwithstanding their prerogatives, are to obey them as the delegates of the apostolic seat.”¹

Similar canons were enacted by the fourth Lateran council under Innocent III., in 1215. “We excommunicate and anathematize every sect that exalts itself against the holy orthodox Catholic faith which we have set forth above, and condemn all heretics under whatever name they are reckoned; and, on being condemned, they are to be resigned to the secular powers of their place, to be punished with proper inflictions; the clergy being first degraded from their order. The goods of the condemned, if laics, are to be confiscated; if clergymen, to be appropriated to the churches from which they drew their salaries.

“The magistrates also, whatever may be the offices they fill, should be admonished, and, if necessary, compelled by an ecclesiastical censure to pledge themselves by a public oath to endeavor, in good faith, as far as they are able, to exterminate from the lands under their jurisdiction all heretics who are condemned by the church, so that hereafter whenever any one is inducted into office, whether ecclesiastical or civil, he may be required to swear that he will execute this canon.

“And should a civil lord, on being required and admonished by the church, neglect to clear his territory of this heretical nuisance, let him be bound by the metropolitan and other bishops of the province with the bond of excommunication: and should he refuse to make satisfaction within a year, let it be signified to the supreme pontiff, that he may declare his vassals to be freed from allegiance to him, expose his land to be seized by Catholics, who, exterminating the heretics, may possess it without opposition, and preserve it in the purity of the faith.

“Catholics who, assuming the sign of the cross, shall gird themselves to the extermination of the heretics, shall enjoy the indulgence, and be fortified by the sacred privilege, which are conceded to those who go to the relief of the holy land.”²

These enactments were incorporated in the decretals of Greg-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. pp. 476-478.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xxii. pp. 986, 987; also pp. 710, 778, 779, 785, 938.

ory IX., and became the law of the church.¹ Thus the Latin hierarchy caused them to be put to death who dissented from its faith, and refused to pay it the homage which it required.

Besides these endeavors to excite the magistrates to slaughter dissenters, Catholics who were not magistrates were encouraged by impunity and approbation to destroy them. Thus Urban II. : "In conformity with the custom of the Roman church, with which you are acquainted, impose on the murderers of excommunicated persons a measure of penance that accords with the institution. For we are not to regard them as homicides because, burning with the zeal of the Catholic mother against the excommunicated, they happen to slay some of them. Lest, however, the discipline of mother church should fall into disuse, according to the practice we have mentioned, impose on them a suitable penance, in order that they may conciliate the eyes of divine truth, if it chance that through human frailty they have been guilty of duplicity in that violence."²

XI. The image caused all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the enslaved, to impress the name of the wild beast or the number of its name on their right hand, or on their forehead, as the worshippers of idols were accustomed to inscribe on themselves conspicuously the names of their deities, or such letters as, in their arithmetical use, were equivalent to the numbers represented by their names.

The name of the ten-horned wild beast is the name of the race that founded the empire over which it reigned under its seventh head, and whose language is the language of its population and rulers, and is *Λατίνος* therefore. The mark is the three letters, *χ. ξ. ς.*, which express the number of that name. To mark themselves with that name or character, in a manner analogous to an inscription or brand, was therefore formally and conspicuously to assume it, or show by open and decisive acts that they were the worshippers of the Latin hierarchy, formed after the model of that wild beast, and bearing its name. Such acts were, a union with the Latin or Roman Catholic church, adoption and profession of its faith, reception of its sacraments, and obedience to its laws. Those who submitted to its rites, offered its worship, and honored its authority, gave as public and ample proof that they were worshippers of its hierarchy as though they had testified it by branding its name or mark on their foreheads or hands. And all were compelled, as is seen from the decrees of Lucius III.

¹ Decret. Gregorii IX. lib. v. tit. vii. c. 9, 13.

² Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 713.

and Innocent III., to give that public proof of their submission to its authority, or forfeit their lives.

XII. And finally, the two-horned wild beast caused that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except he who had the mark, the name of the wild beast, or the number of its name.

All union in acts of religion with the excommunicated, was prohibited by the false canons ascribed to the apostles.¹ The prohibition was extended, by the forged letters of Isidore, to all social acts. "Those who have been excommunicated by the priests, let no one receive before a fair examination by each party, nor join them in prayer, eating, drinking, or a kiss, nor bid them hail; for whoever knowingly communicates with them in these or other forbidden acts, subjects himself to a like excommunication."² And this was held by Hadrian II., who ascended the pontifical throne in 867, as the law, and enjoined on Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, in respect to Charles, king of France. "If he choose to persist in his obstinacy rather than reform according to our commands, withdraw yourself from communion and intercourse with him, not bidding him hail, but wholly avoiding his presence, if you wish to have ecclesiastical intercourse with us."³ Though that command was resisted by Hincmar and his fellow bishops, as uncanonical, it appears to have become the law soon after of the church, and to have been extended to all commercial transactions; as Gregory VII., in 1078, represents himself as induced to mitigate it out of compassion to the multitudes who were debarred from the means of life by the prohibition. "As we see many daily perish on account of excommunication, partly from ignorance, scrupulousness, fear, or necessity; overcome by pity, we for the time soften the sentence of excommunication as far as we can. We therefore, by apostolic authority, release from anathema wives, children, servants, captive women, or slaves, rustics, and all others who are not the ministers of the excommunicated in such a relation as to be the executors of their wicked designs; and those also who unknowingly communicate with the excommunicated, or with those who communicate with the excommunicated. To the stranger or traveller who passes into the territory of the excommunicated, where he cannot buy, or has not the means of buying, we give liberty to receive from the excommunicated. And should any one de-

¹ Can. Apostol. c. x. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 31.

² Callisti Epist. ii. Labbei Concil. tom. i. p. 741.

³ Hadriani Epist. xxv. Labbei tom. xv. p. 847. Bossuetii Defens. Decl. tom. i. pp. 166, 167.

sire to give to the excommunicated for sustenance, not out of pride, but from humanity, we do not prohibit it."¹

The prohibition was, however, renewed, and enforced with the utmost barbarity, by the council of Tours, under Alexander III., in 1163. "A damnable sect rose some time ago in the district of Toulouse, which, gradually spreading itself, like a cancer, through the neighboring regions, has now infected Gascony, and many other provinces. While it hid itself by its serpentine movements, it was destructive to the Lord's vine in proportion to the secrecy of its motion. Wherefore we command the bishops and all the Lord's priests residing in those parts, to watch against it, and enjoin, under the threat of an anathema, that no one, wherever the followers of that sect are found, should venture to yield them a retreat on his lands, give them succor, or have any communion whatever with them, by purchase or sale; so that, having lost all human aid, they may be compelled to return from the error of their way. Let whoever shall dare to contravene this command, be struck with an anathema, as a partaker of their iniquity."²

In like manner the third Lateran council in 1179: "Inasmuch as in Gascony, Albigeese, the province of Toulouse, and other places, the damnable perversity of the heretics by some called Cathari, by others Patarini, by others Publicani, and by others still other names, so that they now no longer exercise their depravity secretly as some do, but publicly show their error, and draw the simple and weak to unite with them; we sentence them, and their defenders and harborers, to an anathema, and forbid under an anathema that any should presume to keep them in their houses, or on their lands, sustain them, or transact any business with them."³

The agencies of the wild beasts, the image, and the people, thus corresponded in all respects with the representations of the prophecy.

The views which expositors have given of this passage are very dissimilar, inconsistent with the characteristics of the symbols, and at war with analogy. Grotius interprets the two-horned beast as denoting magic, which is to make a living being the symbol of a mere art, or deceptive agency, and is therefore against analogy.

Mr. Daubuz exhibits it as representing the two patriarchal lines of Rome and Constantinople. But a wild beast is a sym-

¹ Labbei Concil. tom. xx. p. 506.

² Ibid. tom. xxi. p. 1177.

³ Ibid. tom. xxii. p. 232.

bol, not merely of a line of persons of the same rank, but of a vast combination and succession of persons of various grades, who together fill the offices, and exert the various powers of a government. It represents the intermediate and lower ranks, therefore, as truly as the higher; and its chief is denoted by its head, not by its whole body. It is the symbol also of an aggressive, cruel, and bloody combination of rulers; and of a civil and military power therefore, not merely an ecclesiastical. But the bishops of Constantinople have no civil or military power: nor have those of Rome simply as bishops. Their power as civil monarchs is founded by them on the gift of princes, or the right of conquest, not deduced from the apostles; and was acquired long after they had raised the fabric of their ecclesiastical hierarchy to a vast height. The peculiar actions moreover ascribed to this beast have no counterpart in the agency of the bishops of Constantinople. They never caused the Gothic nations of the western empire to worship the first wild beast, by the ascription to Constantine and his successors of the rights of God which they impiously arrogated; nor induced them to subject their national hierarchies to the supremacy of the pope. So far from it, they were rivals of the Roman patriarchs, and struggled for ages to obstruct their power. The agencies ascribed to this wild beast towards the Gothic conquerors, it is notorious, were exerted by the Latin hierarchy, not by the Greek.

The assumption by Vitrina, that the two-horned beast symbolizes the two orders of friars, the Dominican and Franciscan of the Catholic church, is equally exceptionable. They did not constitute a civil and military, nor even an ecclesiastical government; but were merely two among the numerous orders embraced in the Catholic hierarchy. Nor did they belong wholly or chiefly to the hierarchy of the papal territory. A vast proportion of them were civil subjects of the kings represented by the horns of the first wild beast, and exerted their agency in their dominions. But the two-horned wild beast symbolizes the rulers only, civil and ecclesiastical, of the papal, in contradistinction from the other kingdoms.

Mr. Faber exhibits the two-horned wild beast as the symbol of the spiritual empire of the papacy, which, whether he means, as he doubtless does, mere territory, or population, is erroneous and absurd. If it be the mere territory, it is the territory of the western Roman empire, and the same so far therefore, according to his representation, as the ten-horned wild beast symbolizes. That construction is against analogy also, as living beings are

symbols only of living beings, never of inanimate objects. If it be the population instead of territory, who then are they whom this beast persuades to make an image to the ten-horned wild beast? And who are the inhabitants of the earth that admire and worship that monster?

Mr. Elliott's exposition of this symbol, as denoting the Romish clergy of all orders beneath the pope, is obnoxious to similar objections. By far the greatest part of them neither belonged to the hierarchy of the papal territory, nor were subjects of the papal civil kingdom, but had their birth within the dominions, and exerted their agency under the jurisdiction of the other kings.

Mr. Mede interpreted the symbol of the pope and his clergy, without consideration whether the latter were within the papal territory, or of the other kingdoms; which is to confound those who are symbolized by the image, with those whom the two-horned wild beast represents.

Dean Woodhouse regards the two horns as denoting the papists and Mahometans. But who then does the beast itself denote? Not the false prophet, as he represents. That were to make that which the beast denotes less than that which is symbolized by its horns, inasmuch as the false teachers who are represented by the false prophet are less in number than the whole body of papists whom they teach. And who on that exposition are the subjects of the horns? As they are symbols of a succession of persons exercising a government, they must have subjects and a territory. If the whole body of papists and Mahometans, then, are dynasties or governments, whom do they rule, and where are their dominions? But neither the whole body of the papists, nor the Mahometans, are rulers. They are not the bodies therefore denoted by the horns. Nor have the Mahometans, or their rulers, ever exerted the agency ascribed to the wild beast. They never caused the nations of the western empire to worship the first wild beast, nor led them to adopt the Christian religion as the religion of the state, and place their national churches under the jurisdiction of the pope.

Mr. Faber's and Mr. Elliott's supposition, that the Romish regular and secular clergy are symbolized by the horns, is equally exceptionable. They are not kingly heads of a government, either civil or ecclesiastical.

Mr. Daubuz regarded the image as the same as the two-horned wild beast, which causes the nations to make and worship it. But that is to exhibit it as existing and acting before it was made, and contriving and prompting its own production, which is absurd.

Mr. Whiston exhibits the image as the empire of Charlemagne. But that is to represent it as a territory with its population, instead of an organized body sustaining a resemblance to a civil and military government, and therefore of a different order. It is also to make it the same as a large part of the empire over which the ten-horned wild beast reigned; which is inconsistent with the representation, and fraught with absurdity. How can the Gothic nations be said to have made that territory or its population as subjects of the Frank or German empire? The chief part of that population became the vassals of Charlemagne by conquest, not by their own volition, or the will of the Gothic nations at large. How can it be said that the whole population of the ten kingdoms were constrained to worship that empire; or that those refusing to worship it, were put to death? Did those dwelling in it worship themselves, or their territory? Did those dwelling without its limits worship it or its inhabitants?

Vitringa regarded the tribunal of the Inquisition as the image; Bishop Newton the pope; but their want of correspondence with the symbol is sufficiently apparent.

Mr. Cuninghame regards the image as the symbol of the corrupt visible church, clergy as well as people. He proceeds, however, on the assumption that it is denominated an image to the wild beast, not because it is a resembling authoritative organization, but because it was an object of idolatrous veneration to the people of the Roman empire; which is wholly to mistake the analogy. An image is a structure resembling in form and expression that which it represents. An ecclesiastical organization, to resemble that combination of rulers, which exercised the government of the Roman empire after the accession of Constantine, must therefore be a hierarchy of a similar gradation of ranks, united under a single head. He assumes also that it was an image of the beast, because of a likeness of character as impious, idolatrous, and persecuting, which is equally to misjudge of the analogy. It is the office of a person's image to represent his bodily form and expressions of countenance, not the mere characteristics of his agency. Besides, inasmuch as, except those who refused to worship the image, the whole population, small and great, rich and poor, free and enslaved, belonged to the visible church, if the visible church were the image, who were the worshippers?

Mr. Mede exhibits the image as a symbol of the Roman empire, and as denominated an image of it, under its sixth head, because seduced again by the false prophet to idolatry; but that

is to misinterpret the wild beast as well as the image. The wild beast of two horns is a symbol of rulers, not of an empire manifestly from the crown, the throne, and the great authority ascribed to it. The image therefore must represent an analogous combination of rulers, not a mere territory or population. It is to make the image moreover that identically which it denotes, which is incongruous.

Mr. Faber exhibits the image as a mere idol, which the ten-horned wild beast worshipped. But that is to regard it as of the same species as that which it represents, and is therefore against analogy. It is absurd also if the ten-horned wild beast be as he interprets it, a symbol of the Roman empire geographically considered. What on that assumption can be meant by its worshipping the image? Can a territory exert an act of religious homage?

Mr. Elliott regards the general councils of the church of western Europe as the image; but they exhibit none of the requisite resemblances to the rulers of the Roman empire under its seventh head. They were not a single body, continued by succession and transmitting their powers from one generation to another, but were wholly separate, of distant periods, and independent of each other for existence and authority. They embraced but a part of the rulers of the church of the ten kingdoms of those several periods, not the whole; and were in that respect unlike that vast combination of persons, from the lowest to the highest, exercising office in the Roman empire, symbolized by the ten-horned wild beast under its head that received the death-wound. They had not the prerogatives of a complete government, but were merely legislative and judicial, not executive, and were subject to both an ecclesiastical and a civil head exterior to themselves.

Dr. Cressner, regarding the ten-horned wild beast as the symbol of the Roman empire, exhibits the image as the Roman Catholic church with the pope as its head, and deems its likeness to the wild beast to consist in its having a supreme head like the imperial government, and occupying the same territory as the empire, or embracing the same population. But that is to confound the teachers and rulers of the church which the image represents, with the unofficial members who are their worshippers.

The solutions which expositors have presented of the name and number of the beast, are extremely various, and exhibit generally a singular inattention to the conditions of the symbol. They seem neither to have considered that the rulers of the an-

cient empire under its last head, were those whom the Latin and Gothic population of the new were induced to worship, or inquired into the reason of that homage; nor to have suspected that it was after the dragon under that seventh head that the image was modelled, or that any reason existed for the selection of the name of the race from which the rulers symbolized by that head sprung, rather than the name of the rulers and races of the modern empire. They have generally indeed neglected to discriminate between an empire and its rulers, and treated alike the ten-horned wild beast, the wild beast of two horns, and the dragon, as a symbol of a territory and its population, not of a combination and succession of persons exercising the government of a people or community of nations: and have accordingly presented names of persons, of cities, of empires, and even of classes of agents, as the counterpart of the symbol, on the mere ground that they are significant, and represent, or are associated with the requisite number. Thus Vitranga offers Adonikam, the name in Hebrew of one who returned from the Babylonian captivity because of its meaning, the Lord has risen, and the number of his family, six hundred sixty-six. Ezra chap. ii. 13. Mr. Faber presents the Greek words *Βλάσφημος* and *Ἀποστάτης*, merely denoting agents of certain characters, never appellatives of a nation or its rulers. Others have suggested the title in Greek of the Latin empire, *Ἡ Λατινὴ Βασιλεία*: but that is a title of the empire, not of the race by whom it was founded, and from whom its rulers derived their designation, and is not in accordance therefore with the conditions of the symbol. There is no one that meets all those conditions except *Λατῆνιος* which was first suggested by Irenæus toward the close of the second century, and has been more generally deemed the true one than any other, though with but very inadequate views of the reasons which demonstrate it to be that which the Spirit of God designed, or the grounds on which it was chosen in preference to other designations.

It is notorious that the Catholic church of the papal territory in Italy, was denominated immediately after the rise of those kingdoms, the Latin church, in contradistinction from the Greek, the Syrian, and the Alexandrian, and has borne that appellative through every subsequent age to the present; and that the Latin language is the sole vehicle of its worship, its rites, its instructions, its laws, its correspondence, and the acts also of its civil government. Whoever therefore entered that church and received its baptism, united in its worship, or became the subject as a member, of any of its official agency, assumed and became distin-

guished by that appellative as conspicuously and as necessarily, as those became marked by it, who drew their birth from the ancient Latins ; and as the offspring of other nations derive their national appellative from their parentage. And as the Latin church extended its jurisdiction over the hierarchies of the other European kingdoms, that appellative was applied to them all. The other ancient churches were also distinguished in like manner by an appellative drawn from their race, their country, or their capital, as the Greek, the Syrian, the Judean, the Egyptian, or Alexandrian. On the other hand, the churches within the western empire, dissenting from the Latin or Catholic, were universally distinguished by different names, drawn generally from their founders, the people of whom they were formed, or some peculiar characteristic ; and their worship was as universally conducted in a different language ; as those of the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Wicklifites, the Lollards, the Bohemian, the Lutheran, the Reformed, the Genevan, the English, and the Scotch.

Those who joined the Latin church, in receiving that name, received the patronymic, or appellative of the race from which the rulers of the ancient empire descended, who first adopted Christianity as the religion of the state, gave the church a national establishment, organized its teachers and rulers into a hierarchy, and forced their subjects to become its members, or subjected them to persecution and death ; and were thence guilty of usurping the rights of God. And these important resemblances of its principles and agency, as well as that its shape was modelled after that civil power, were reasons undoubtedly that the nationalized Catholic hierarchies of the ten kingdoms, in their union as one under the pope, are denominated its image. And the reason that *Λατίνος* was chosen as the name, which those who enter that apostate church are said to receive, is that that appellative, which they receive by their union to that church and that alone, is common to it with that ancient dragon rule, and suggests its resemblance to it under its seventh head, in form, in principle, and in agency.

SECTION XXXIII.

CHAPTER XIV. 1-5.

THE HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND ON MOUNT ZION.

AND I looked, and behold the Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty-four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as a voice of many waters, and as a voice of loud thunder. And the voice which I heard, [was] as of harpers harping on their harps. And they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. And no one was able to learn the song, except the hundred forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. They are they who have not been defiled with women; for they are pure. They are they who follow the Lamb wherever he may go. They have been redeemed from men, a first offering to God, and to the Lamb; and in their mouth no falsehood was found, for they are spotless.

The position from which the apostle saw this spectacle, was probably that from which he had beheld the emergence and agency of the wild beast, and therefore on the earth. The Mount Zion, on which the hundred forty-four thousand stood, was that of the heavenly tabernacle, and their station was doubtless on the glassy sea, or part answering to the court in which the worshippers stood. The song accordingly which he heard from heaven, was their song; not the song of the other redeemed, or of angels. This is apparent from the representation that it was sung before the living creatures and elders, and that no one was able to learn it, but the hundred forty-four thousand. To suppose it to have been sung by others, is to suppose they had already learned it.

That it is a new song denotes that it is uttered on a new and peculiar occasion, and for new and peculiar gifts. The peculiarity of the occasion is that it is the commencement of Christ's reign in his new relation as king of the earth, by the resurrection of a portion of his people from death in glory, and exaltation to the stations in his presence which they are thenceforth to fill; while the reason of their first resurrection and assumption to his presence is, that they are not defiled with idolatry. They have not belonged to the apostate church, nor sanctioned the blasphemous usurpations of the wild beast; but are pure worshippers

of God, without falsehood and without spot. Therefore they are redeemed from the earth, a first offering to God and to the Lamb, and are thereafter to follow him wherever he goes, the attendants of his throne, and spectators of all his great acts in judging his foes, and redeeming his saints. They have the name of the Lamb and of his Father written on their foreheads, and are distinguished by that also from the worshippers of the image, and are the same as the hundred forty-four thousand sealed, whose numbers were heard by the apostle in the vision of the seventh chapter.

To have the name of God and of the Lamb written on the forehead, is to be brought to a public and decisive manifestation of allegiance to the Most High, and him alone, as of title to religious homage, and right to impose religious laws; and of faith alone in Christ as Redeemer: in contradistinction from those who sanction the impious assumptions of civil rulers and apostate prophets, that claim dominion over the rights and laws of God; make themselves, and demons, and idols, objects of homage; and supersede the Redeemer by other mediators and other grounds of reliance. As the worshippers of the image of the wild beast impress on themselves its mark and number, by entering the society of that apostate hierarchy, submitting to its rites, offering its idolatrous worship, and obeying its sway; so the worshippers of God become impressed with his name and the name of the Lamb, by refusing to join that idolatrous train, and publicly asserting the sole right of God to institute the laws of religion and receive a religious homage, paying to him alone the worship he demands, and placing in Christ exclusively the trust he requires as Redeemer.

In the vision of the sealing in the seventh chapter, the agents by whom this great movement is to be excited, are symbolized by the angel ascending from the sun-rising,—an emblem of a new day, or the commencement of a new era,—bearing the seal of God; and the result of their agency on the servants of God, is denoted by the impress of the seal on their foreheads. In the second vision of that chapter, a great multitude of every nation, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, was exhibited to the apostle as standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palms, and uttering like these with a loud voice the song: The salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb; and the Lamb is represented as thenceforth dwelling with them and leading them to the fountains of the waters of life. That spectacle, as was shown in its exposition, exhibits the

whole of the redeemed at the advent of Christ, raised from death, presented to the Father, adopted as sons and heirs, and assigned to the stations of kings and priests in the everlasting empire which is then to be established on the earth. This exhibits the sealed as first crowned with that salvation. They are a first-offering to God, and are the witnesses who in the eleventh chapter are represented as slain, and after three years and a half, raised from death and assumed to heaven, anterior to the seventh trumpet. The larger multitude are to be raised at the advent of Christ, subsequently to that trumpet.

Mr. Daubuz supposes the hundred forty-four thousand to represent the church in the time of Constantine ; and their song to symbolize its celebration at that period of its deliverance from persecution, and its legal establishment. But that is disproved by many considerations. It assumes that the Mount Zion, on which the Lamb stood with the hundred forty-four thousand, was on earth, and thence implies that the Lamb was personally and visibly present with the church in its celebration of its adoption and nationalization by Constantine. As the Lamb symbolizes himself as truly as the hundred forty-four thousand symbolize those whom they represent, so his visibility in the vision as truly symbolizes his visibility in the scene which it foreshadows, as their visibility in it foreshows the visibility, in the symbolized scene, of those whom they represent. To reject this great law, is to deny to the visions all certainty of meaning. If a visible presence do not symbolize a visible presence, then an agent may not represent an agent, nor an agency an agency, and all possibility is at once extinguished of demonstrative interpretation. But no visible advent of Christ took place at the celebration by the church of its adoption by Constantine. The vision cannot represent that celebration therefore.

The character of the church under that monarch, was precisely the reverse of that ascribed to the hundred forty-four thousand. So far from having the name of God written on their foreheads, the Christians of that period as a body, paid a religious homage to Constantine and his associates, who were the first or dragon wild beast under its seventh head, by acquiescing in his usurpation of dominion over the rights of God, his erection of them into a civil community, his making his will the law of their duty to God, and enforcing obedience to it by the penalties of confiscation, imprisonment, exile, and death ; an arrogation of the divine prerogatives the most stupendous of which creatures have ever been guilty, and on account of which that prince and his successors, though

nominally Christian, are exhibited by the Spirit of God under the symbol of the seventh head of the dragon. Yet, so far as appears, not a voice of objection was raised against it by any of the conspicuous bishops at that period. Those of the people of God who refused that homage, are represented in the twelfth chapter, as flying into the desert, there to be nourished in seclusion and sorrow twelve hundred and sixty years. They cannot, therefore, be those who in this vision are exhibited as assembled on Mount Zion in the presence of the Lamb, and singing a new song which no one else was able to learn.

The hundred forty-four thousand who have the name of God on their foreheads, are most clearly exhibited as cotemporaneous with apostates who bear the mark of the beast, and are long subsequent, therefore, to the period of Constantine and his successors, as they are subsequent at least to the rise of the ten kingdoms, the acquisition by the Italian hierarchy of a civil dominion, and the erection of the image. And finally, it is manifest from the representations of the seventh chapter, that the period of the sealing is subsequent to the opening of the sixth seal; after, therefore, the series of judgments that are immediately to precede the advent of the Redeemer has commenced, and thence between the first vial and the seventh trumpet; and more than fifteen centuries, therefore, after the reign of Constantine.

Mr. Mede, Mr. Whiston, Vitranga, Bishop Newton, Dean Woodhouse, Mr. Faber, regard the hundred forty-four thousand as representing the pure worshippers during the long triumph of the wild beast and false prophet, and especially the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Bohemians, and the Protestants. But the sealing itself is exhibited in the seventh chapter, as accomplished after the opening of the sixth seal, and when, therefore, the triumph of the wild beast has at least nearly closed, and its judgment begun. It is represented also as accomplished within a brief period before the winds of political violence and revolution are excited to injure the earth, the sea, and the trees. It cannot be a period, therefore, of general persecution of the pure worshippers; nor a period of twelve hundred and sixty years, as no such season of calm has ever been witnessed in the politics of the ten kingdoms.

The distinguishing characteristic of the sealed, is a full and emphatic denial and resistance of the assumed right of civil rulers and legalized hierarchies to legislate in the place of God, make their will the ground of obligation and rule of faith and worship, and treat a dissent from it as a crime against them and

against the Almighty. But that attitude was never fully assumed by the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Bohemians, nor in any degree by the Protestants as a body. No formal objection was ever made by them generally against the assumption by rulers of that power over their subjects. They only protested against their exerting it in the patronage of an apostate faith and worship, in place of the true. The Bohemians, the Lutherans, and the Reformed more especially, openly asserted the right and duty of rulers to nationalize the true church, and enforce its doctrines and rites on their subjects. Those bodies, therefore, eminent as multitudes of them were for piety, illustrious as thousands and myriads of them were as martyrs, were yet without that peculiarity which is to distinguish the sealed, and thence cannot be the host symbolized by the hundred forty-four thousand.

The believers of the period during which the persecuting powers prevail, are exhibited under the symbols of the woman nourished in the desert, and the witnesses in sackcloth, conditions the reverse of a station on Mount Zion in the presence of the Lamb, and denoting persons of a wholly different period and relation both to God and to men.

And finally, the hundred forty-four thousand are exhibited as a first-fruit to God and the Lamb, while the harvest is represented as afterwards gathered. They are of the same age, therefore, doubtless as those who constitute the harvest, as the first-fruits are first in relation only to others later gathered, of the same season, not of other years. They are the first who are wholly to reject the usurped dominion of men over the worship and worshippers of God, and yield him the rights and the honor which are his due; and are to sustain that relation of a first-offering to God towards the myriads of a later period, who are to be led to a perception of the errors of the usurping rulers and apostate ecclesiastics, renunciation of their authority, and avoidance of their communion. They are a first-offering also, as they are first redeemed from death under the reign of Christ over the earth as its visible king, and presented to the Father for acceptance.

Mr. Elliott's assumption that the hundred forty-four thousand are the Protestants, is open to the same objections. He like Mr. Mede, Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Whiston, Vitranga, and Dean Woodhouse, regards them as stationed on the earth. But that renders the supposition that they represent the believers of the age of Constantine, the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Bohemians, or the Reformers, and their successors, still more irreconcilable with

the symbol. If their station be on the earth, then manifestly they are not the utterers of the song, inasmuch as that descended from heaven, and was chanted before the throne, and before or exterior to the living creatures and elders. But if they are not the singers, they are not exhibited as exerting any agency, which were unlike all other living symbols, and without any conceivable reason. Besides, to suppose they are on earth, and yet enjoy the visible presence of the Lamb, and hear and understand the songs of heaven, is to suppose that their faculties are raised to a supernatural strength, or that they enjoy miraculous means of knowledge. Their standing in the presence of the Lamb, and if they are the hearers, hearing the song from heaven, cannot be interpreted of their attaining a knowledge of the doctrines respecting Christ and the heavenly world, that are taught in the Scriptures. The song is a new one, prompted by a new and peculiar occasion, and was never before sung, therefore, in heaven or on earth. If then they hear it, it is indisputably by a miracle, like that by which the apostle heard it. If they see the Lamb, as he saw him, hear the heavenly chant, know like him from whom it proceeds, and understand its import, then they manifestly are prophets in the same sense as he was. To suppose it otherwise,—to regard the representation as indicating nothing more than the illumination believers of the age of Constantine, of the Waldenses, the Bohemians, the Reformers, or their followers of the present day enjoy, were to degrade the symbol and empty it of all its significance. But none of those bodies have given any indications of such a supernatural knowledge, and cannot, therefore, were the supposition allowable that they were on the earth, be those whom the symbol represents.

Mr. Cuninghame likewise supposes their station to have been on the earth, but regards them as representing the living saints who are to be transfigured at the advent of the Redeemer, and caught up to him in the air. But as, if they are to be on the earth, they are to be raised to a peculiarity of relation to Christ, an elevation of faculties, and a grandeur of knowledge immeasurably transcending the highest gifts of ordinary believers, and nothing less than the supernatural sight and sense of prophetic ecstacy; the symbol must indicate, not that they are to be transfigured, but that they are to exercise the prophetic office on earth, and imply that the prophecy of Joel is yet to be fulfilled before the descent of the Redeemer. "It shall come to pass in the last days, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream

dreams, your young men shall see visions." Such, objectionable as it would be, would be a far more plausible construction of the vision, were they exhibited as on the earth, than any of the explanations offered by commentators: but, as they were in heaven, as is indisputable from the representation, on the one hand, that they only were able to learn the song, and on the other, that the song was heard from heaven, the event which it denotes is not of that kind, nor is it to take place in our world, but in the presence of God in heaven, and is to be of the nature I have suggested. It undoubtedly represents, therefore, the assumption of the witnesses after their resurrection and elevation to the stations in the presence of the Redeemer, which they are ever thereafter to fill. This accords in all respects with the representations of the passage. It accounts for the descent of the song from heaven, while yet it was not uttered either by the living creatures nor the elders. It accounts for its being a new and peculiar song, such as no others of the redeemed had had occasion, or could ever have occasion to chant. It accounts for their enjoying the visible presence of the Lamb anterior to his advent. But the supposition that they are merely to behold him in ecstatic vision, is not in accordance with the law of symbolization. It were to make the vision of the Lamb by the hundred forty-four thousand, the symbol of a mere vision of him by those whom they represent, not of his personal presence with them, which is against analogy. The counterpart of a symbolic presence is a real one. Otherwise none of the symbols are of any certainty representatives of real agents and agencies. Their whole fulfilment may be visionary, and thence they may have had their accomplishment, and their whole accomplishment in the ecstatic thoughts of some prophet cotemporary with the apostle, or of ages long since passed. Their sight of the Lamb then is to be a real sight, their station with him is to be a station in his real presence, and therefore, as it is to be anterior to his advent, is to be at the heavenly sanctuary. It accords with the representation in the eleventh chapter, that the witnesses are to be literally raised from the dead, and assumed to heaven immediately anterior to the seventh trumpet, and the descent of the Redeemer; and finally, the agency ascribed to the hundred forty-four thousand accords with that of the innumerable multitudes who are exhibited as standing before the throne of God and the Lamb. Like them they sing a song, though different in its theme, and like them they are thereafter to follow the Lamb wherever he may go, and dwell forever in his presence.

But may not the hundred forty-four thousand on Mount Zion, who are thus clearly to be not on earth, but raised to glory, denote the saints who are to be transfigured at the advent of Christ, rather than the witnesses who are to be raised from death? That supposition, though consistent with several of the peculiarities ascribed to them, as that they are to be a first-offering to God, and to sing a new song, in which no other can join, has yet nothing decisive to support it; while the proofs are irresistible that the hundred forty-four thousand and the witnesses are the same. The period of the sealed is obviously the same as that of the witnesses. The hundred forty-four thousand are represented as receiving the name of God on their foreheads under the sixth seal, immediately before the tempest which is to devastate the earth is let loose, and in preparation for that whirlwind. Ye may not injure the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we can seal the servants of our God on their foreheads;—implying that when his servants are sealed, the angels having power over the winds may commence their work of ruin; and that work, obviously from the flight of all ranks to the caverns and rocks to escape the presence of the Lamb, is immediately to precede his advent. But the witnesses are to be slain also and raised from death immediately before the seventh trumpet, which is to be the signal of his advent. They are undoubtedly therefore of the same period. Their character also is as obviously the same. The sealed are those who have the name of God written on their foreheads, in contradistinction from those who have the mark of the wild beast. They are true worshippers, who acknowledge God's exclusive right to homage, and refuse the idolatrous submission to civil rulers, and nationalized hierarchies which they require; and that is also the peculiar characteristic of the witnesses. They refuse submission to the usurpations of the wild beast and the idolatries of the great city Babylon; and it is for that reason that they are to be put to death. They are of the same character therefore as the sealed. But the sealed, doubtless, embrace all true worshippers who refuse subjection to the usurpers of the rights of God, and are free from the stain of idolatry. As then they are of the same period, of the same faith, and of the same agency, and as the sealed must be supposed to include all of their character, they and the witnesses are undoubtedly the same. The witnesses are not to be constituted witnesses by their being martyred, but are to be martyred because they are witnesses; and as all the witnesses are repre-

sented as slain, and they who are slain are undoubtedly sealed, all the sealed are therefore to be slain.

The representation that they have not been guilty of idolatry, indicates that they are to consist of those who have never sanctioned the civil rulers, nor apostate hierarchies in their usurpations. They are probably, therefore, to arise after the questions to be raised by the angel from the sun-rising have begun to be discussed, and the people of God become furnished with large means of understanding the principles on which the claims of the antichristian powers are founded, and discerning the idolatry which an assent to them involves.

SECTION XXXIV.

CHAPTER XIV. 6-7.

THE ANGEL HAVING THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL.

AND I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having the everlasting gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear ye God, and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship ye him who made the heaven, and the earth, and sea, and fountains of waters.

The gospel is everlasting, as it is the gospel unchanged which Christ and the apostles preached, and which is to remain unchanged, and be preached to successive generations through eternal years,—not the new and antichristian gospel invented and proclaimed by the false prophet; as it relates to the everlasting government of God, and reveals the principles on which it is forever to be conducted; and as it proffers everlasting life to men. The angel, like others, is the representative of a body and succession of men. His flight in mid-heaven, denotes the conspicuity of their mission. Those who dwell on the earth, are the inhabitants of the ten kingdoms, as distinguished from whom every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, are the other nations of the world. His first summons is to fear God, and give him glory. To fear him, is to regard him with the supreme awe that is due to his infinite greatness and station. To give him glory, is to manifest that awe by a public acknowledg-

ment and celebration of his being, perfections, and works, as creator and ruler, a recognition of his rights, and submission to his will. The reason offered for that summons is, that the hour of his judgment is come; the period in which he is to reclaim the rights which men have usurped, vindicate the prerogatives they have denied, and punish both those who arrogate his throne, and those who pay them the homage that is due only to him. His next injunction is, to worship Him who made the heaven, and the earth, and sea, and fountains of waters. The heaven, earth, and sea, when thus distinguished from each other, denote the world of men, in their relations as rulers and subjects: the sun symbolizing the rulers of a nation, or community of nations; the earth, a people under a settled form of government; a sea, the multitude of a great nation in the commotions of war, or a revolution; and fountains, remoter tribes and communities intimately related to a great central people. The command implies therefore that the nations of the earth are worshipping their rulers, or making their customs under a settled constitution the law of conscience, or giving that honor to the usages and opinions of other communities, or yielding it to the principles and passions of an excited and lawless multitude; and is a summons to withdraw their homage from creatures, and yield it only to the creator.

This symbol then represents a body and succession of men, who are to bear the everlasting gospel both to the nations of the ten kingdoms, and to all other tribes and languages of the earth, and to summon them to fear God and glorify him by a just acknowledgment and homage; to warn them that the hour of his judgment is come, in which he is to punish those who usurp his throne and arrogate his rights; and enjoin them to worship, not rulers or subjects, but him only, their creator. This office has, doubtless, already been fulfilled in part by those who, during the last half century, have employed themselves in presenting the word of God translated into their several languages, to the nations of the earth, and in proclaiming its glad tidings of salvation. That great movement commenced, as will be shown hereafter, contemporaneously with the commencement of the judgment by the effusion of the first vial. The warning that the hour of the judgment of usurping rulers and apostate priests is come, is as yet but very partially uttered; or the summons to worship the creator, not creatures, whatever may be their station, their pretensions, or their number. The great obstacles which the heralds of the gospel have everywhere, within and without the ten

kingdoms, to encounter, are notoriously those which this summons implies;—the authority of antichristian rulers, apostate priests, established constitutions, hereditary opinions, prejudices, and passions; and the first step towards the conversion of the nations to God, is their extrication from an abject vassalage to man. Such is eminently the condition, not only of the numerous millions of India, Hindostan, Burmah, and China, of all Mahometan and Catholic nations, of the Greek, the Armenian, and the Syrian communions, but of the Protestant established churches also.

Mr. Daubuz refers this symbol to the age of Constantine; Mr. Mede, chiefly to the contest in respect to images in the eighth and ninth centuries; Mr. Brightman, to the fourteenth century; and Mr. Whiston, Vitringa, and Dean Woodhouse, to the sixteenth: but the events of those periods answer to it but in a very inadequate degree. The gospel was not then conveyed to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, nor had the hour come of God's judgment on the wild beast and false prophet.

Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Elliott, and the late English expositors generally, refer it to the translation and distribution of the Scriptures, and evangelical missions of the present century. But it is obviously to embrace not only the gift of the Scriptures to all tribes, and languages, and peoples, but a warning also that the hour of judgment on the antichristian powers has come, and a summons of all nations, Christian as well as heathen, to abandon the homage of creatures, virtual as well as open, ascribe the attributes, the prerogatives, and the honors of the deity to God only, and pay him alone their worship.

SECTION XXXV.

CHAPTER XIV. 8.

THE FALL OF BABYLON.

AND another, a second angel followed, saying, She has fallen, great Babylon has fallen, which made the nations drink of the infuriating wine of her fornication.

Great Babylon is the aggregate of the nationalized hierarchies of the ten kingdoms, whatever be their names; as is

shown in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. She symbolizes the teachers and rulers of the churches, with whom the kings of the earth join in the institution, practice, and dissemination of a false religion; uniting with her in the usurpation of the rights of God as lawgiver, upholding her in her pretence to his authority for her impious assumptions, offering the worship she enjoins and because of her appointing it, and imposing and enforcing it on their subjects. Her difference accordingly from the image to the wild beast is, that she embraces the Protestant hierarchies of the ten kingdoms, as well as the Papal and Catholic, which constitute that image:—the vast structure of nationalized ecclesiastical rulers and teachers, who usurp the rights of God, whatever may be their divisions or names, hold a faith essentially false, offer an unauthorized worship, and act with the antichristian civil powers in their usurpations and persecutions. The image to the wild beast, on the other hand, denotes only the array of Catholic rulers and teachers within and without the papal territories, which the princes and people erected into one vast hierarchy with the pope as its head, and invested with a sway over the church, analogous to that which the civil rulers exert over their political empire. The fall of the city is accordingly her dejection from that station as a legal establishment, the creature and organ of the civil governments, deriving her revenues from their treasuries, and supporting her usurped dominion by their power. This is apparent from her continued existence after her fall has taken place, as is shown by the summons of the people of God, by the angel in the eighteenth chapter, to come out of her, after having announced that she had fallen. As she is to subsist after her dejection, her fall cannot be her dissolution as a community; nor can it be the dissolution of her government or hierarchy, inasmuch as the image also is to continue to subsist after her fall, as is seen from the command not to worship the image, which is uttered by the third angel immediately after the annunciation of her fall. Her fall is therefore her severance from the civil governments, and dejection from her station and power as a combination of national establishments. The angel here simply announces her fall. In the eighteenth chapter, he adds the reasons of her dejection, and the character of her subsequent vassals.

This symbol then foreshows that the usurping hierarchies denoted by great Babylon, are to be thrown down from their stations as national establishments. As the angel announcing her fall, follows the angel bearing the everlasting gospel, her fall is

to take place not only after those represented by the latter have commenced their work, but undoubtedly after they have fulfilled it. This angel, like that, is the representative of a body of men ; his flight in mid-heaven denotes their publicity and conspicuity ; and his annunciation, that there is to be a public and exulting celebration of her overthrow.

Grotius, Bellarmine, Dr. Hammond, Rosenmuller, and Mr. Daubuz, regard great Babylon as pagan Rome. But that is to assume that the symbol is of the same species as the thing symbolized, which is against analogy. Ancient Babylon is a symbol, not of a literal city, but of an apostate and idolatrous hierarchy.

Mr. Brightman, Mr. Mede, and Bishop Newton, exhibit the Romish church as great Babylon, and the denunciation of her idolatries by the Albigenes, Waldenses, Wicklifites, and others of that period, as the annunciation of her fall. But that was a proclamation of her apostasy to idol-worship simply, not of her dejection from her station as a nationalized hierarchy. She did not then fall from her civil establishment by the nations, nor had those symbolized by the angel bearing the everlasting gospel, then fulfilled their office.

Cocceius and Vitringa interpret her fall of the secession of the Protestant nations from the Catholic communion in the sixteenth century, and establishment of the Reformed churches in her place. But, on the one hand, there was no total severance at that period of the Catholic hierarchies from the civil governments ; and on the other, the Protestant churches, so far from going out of great Babylon, continued in her community by still acting on her principles, arrogating the same dominion over the laws of God, and uniting in the same manner with the civil powers in imposing their creeds and rites on others, and persecuting dissentients. That assumption of the prerogatives of God is the great and fundamental crime of the antichristian church, from which her other unauthorized arrogations and her idolatrous worship spring. It is because of that, that she pretends that her agency is essential to salvation ; that she denies the legitimacy of any other rites, and the acceptableness to God of any other worship than hers ; and that she claims submission to her authority as an act of allegiance to him. It is because of that, that she perverts the ordinances of the gospel, institutes a superstitious worship, and enjoins the homage of idols. The Protestant nationalized churches, therefore, great as was the sum of her false doctrines which they rejected, inasmuch as they

thus imitated her in an arrogation of the throne of God, and elevation of their authority above his rights and will, still continued to belong to great Babylon, and are to share in her fall.

SECTION XXXVI.

CHAPTER XIV. 9-13.

THE THIRD ANGEL DENOUNCING WRATH ON THE WORSHIPPERS OF THE WILD BEAST AND ITS IMAGE.

AND another, a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any one worship the wild beast, and its image, and receive a mark on his forehead, or on his hand, he shall even drink of the wine of the wrath of God poured an unmixed wine into the cup of his indignation, and shall be tormented in fire and brimstone before the holy angels, and before the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever. And they have no rest day and night who worship the wild beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name. Here is the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who hereafter die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their toils, and their works follow with them.

As this angel follows the others, the agents whom he represents are to be of a later period than those whom they symbolize. His warning implies, that notwithstanding great Babylon has fallen from her station as a national establishment, men are still worshipping the wild beast and its image, and receiving its mark; and that the wild beast therefore and the Catholic hierarchies of the fallen city denoted by the image, still continue their usurpation of the rights of God, and domineer over the church, although no longer in the same relations to each other. Those Romish hierarchies are still to subsist therefore after their fall, and acknowledge the pope as their head.

The tremendous punishment threatened to whoever continues to worship those antichristian powers, and unite in their idolatries, implies that their assumptions are a virtual usurpation of the throne of God, and arrogation of his essential prerogatives, and that whoever accordingly submits to their claims, and ren-

ders them the allegiance they exact, exalts them to the station of the Almighty, yields them the homage that is due only to him, and must necessarily thence be treated as a deliberate and incorrigible apostate. It indicates therefore that at that period, the principles on which those arrogations and that worship proceed, are to be so fully discussed and developed, that all shall be able to discern and appreciate their relations to the rights of God and the obligations of creatures.

The representation that at that crisis the saints who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are to display their patience; and that they who thereafter die in the Lord are blessed, because of the release they are to obtain from their toils, and the rewards to which they are to be exalted; foreshows that the antichristian powers are to carry their endeavors to domineer over believers, and force them to apostatize, to the extreme of a bloody persecution; as the saints are in the thirteenth chapter exhibited as displaying their patience in enduring the war made on them by the wild beast. To die in the Lord, is to die for his sake as a witness to his truth; as to be a prisoner in the Lord, is to be a prisoner as his minister. That their works are to follow with them, denotes doubtless that they are immediately to be raised from death, and as kings and priests in Christ's kingdom on earth, to resume their work towards the nations, and exert an important instrumentality in converting them to the homage of God.

This persecution is obviously to be of a later period than that in which the witnesses are to be slain; as this is to follow the fall of great Babylon, and take place at the summons and final withdrawal of the people of God from connection with the apostate hierarchies; but that is to precede her fall, as the resurrection of the witnesses is to be the occasion of the earthquake by which a tenth of her is to be overthrown.

This symbol, then, foreshows, that after great Babylon has fallen from her station as a combination of nationalized hierarchies, numerous teachers are to arise, who, publicly and strenuously asserting the exclusive right of God to enjoin the faith and institute the worship of the church, and pointing out the error and impiousness of the principles on which civil and ecclesiastical rulers proceed, who usurp dominion over his law, and demand supreme homage to their authority, shall denounce his avenging judgments on all who thereafter yield submission to those antichristian powers; and that the wild beast will obstruct them and endeavor by persecution to compel them to apostatize,

and put them to death; but that they will sustain the conflict with a patience and fidelity worthy of prophets, and receive for their steadfastness, a speedy resurrection and elevation to the station of kings and priests, and participation in the momentous agencies on which the glorified saints are immediately thereafter to enter with Christ at the establishment of his kingdom on the earth.

The great principles on which the pure and the apostate church proceed, are thus immediately before the advent of the Redeemer, to be brought into the most open and violent antagonism; the worshippers of God are to give the most public and perfect demonstration of the truth and inflexibleness of their allegiance, by resigning their lives, rather than apostatize; and the antichristian powers and their vassals are to give the most resistless proof of their deliberate and incorrigible apostasy, by continuing their rebellion amidst the threatenings of avenging judgments; and thus demonstrate the propriety of the discrimination the Son of God is immediately to make between them, in raising his slaughtered people from death and exalting them to the rewards of his kingdom, and in condemning the apostates and consigning them to everlasting punishment.

Mr. Daubuz regarded this angel as symbolizing the witnesses who testify against the corruptions of the church, through the whole period of the wild beast and false prophet; and the judgments that are threatened to the worshippers of the wild beast and its image, as the temporal calamities with which, during the same period, the antichristian nations were to be scourged. But the gospel had not at the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty years, been preached to every nation, nor had great Babylon fallen. The period is therefore wrong. Nor are eternal punishments ever made the symbols of temporal. It were against analogy. The punishments therefore threatened to the worshippers of the wild beast, are not calamities of this life.

Mr. Brightman and Bishop Newton regarded this angel as a representative of Luther and his associate Reformers. But Babylon had not then fallen, nor had the gospel been made known to all nations, nor has either of them yet taken place. Nothing is clearer than that the period denoted by the vision is yet future. Mr. Daubuz, Bishop Newton, and others, are perplexed, on their views of the symbol, to determine the nature or reason of the blessedness promised to those who thereafter die in the Lord. But that promise is raised to a significance worthy of an express annunciation from heaven, when it is seen that those

to whom it is addressed are the martyrs who are to be slain in the last war of antichrist, and immediately to be raised from death, and exalted, because of their fidelity, to eminent stations in the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

SECTION XXXVII.

CHAPTER XIV. 14-16.

THE ANGEL LIKE THE SON OF MAN.

AND I looked, and behold a white cloud; and on the cloud one sat like the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple crying with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, Thrust thy sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he who sat on the cloud thrust his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

He who sat on the cloud, like the other principal agents in the visions, except the Son of God, is a symbol of a class and multitude. He is like the Son of Man. He represents human beings therefore indisputably, and human beings doubtless raised from the dead in glory, like the human form of Christ in his exaltation. He obviously is not the representative of angels. The likeness which he bore was given him undoubtedly, and mentioned by the apostle to denote the species of beings whom he symbolizes. There is, indeed, no such analogy between men generally and angels, as to render the former a fit symbol of the latter, were there any occasion for their symbolization. They are not of sufficient strength and dignity, are imperfect in knowledge, and are sinful. Angels, on the other hand, are employed to symbolize, not men generally, but those who are exalted to stations of extraordinary power, and exert vast influences; and there is an obvious propriety in that symbolization; as there is an analogy between that higher order of beings and men who are raised to a great elevation above the race generally, in office and agency. When angels are exhibited as exerting an agency in the events symbolized on the earth, they appear in their own persons, as in the next vision, and in the binding of Satan in the twentieth chapter. And finally, the symbolization

of the saints raised from death in glory by one like the Son of Man in his glorified body, was requisite to avoid the violation of analogy. Any other representation would naturally have implied, that the beings symbolized were either of a different order, or human beings unglorified and mortal. If the phrase, like the Son of Man, be translated like a son of man, it still supports the same conclusion. What reason can be conceived for the symbolic agent's being endowed with that likeness, except that he is the representative of human beings; or for his being said to be like one of the human race, not a mortal man, except that he is a representative of human beings changed from their mortal and unglorified life, to a superior form? As he is the representative, then, of human beings raised from death, in a beauty and splendor of form like that of the glorified body of the Redeemer, the golden crown on his head denotes that they had already been presented to the Father, adopted as sons and joint-heirs with Christ, and assigned to stations as kings and priests in his kingdom. The period of this agency is after the revivification of the witnesses therefore, and doubtless also from the vast numbers requisite to such an office, after the visible advent of Christ and resurrection of the holy dead of all ages.

They who are harvested by him are also human beings on the earth, and living therefore and mortal, and are doubtless the saints. In their symbolization by inanimate objects, they are exhibited as passive subjects of the event foreshown, not its efficient agents. As crops are harvested for the purpose of preservation and appropriation to the uses for which they are raised; so the reaping of the subjects of this harvest denotes their being gathered for preservation, and appropriation to the ends for which they are sanctified.

That an angel came forth from the temple, and apprized the reaper when to thrust his sickle, denotes that a messenger from heaven is to announce to those whom he symbolizes the moment when they are to enter on their work; and is in accordance with the representation of Christ, that it is with the voice of a great trumpet that he is to send his angels to gather together his elect.

This beautiful symbol thus foreshows that ere the final destruction of the vassals of antichrist, the living saints are to be gathered together for preservation, and probably for the judgment and acceptance which are symbolized by the parable of the separation of the sheep from the goats; that that event is to take place certainly after the witnesses, and doubtless after the holy dead universally have been raised, accepted, and invested with crowns;

that they are to be the angels who are to gather together the elect, and that they are previously to descend to the clouds, await the approach of the great moment, and receive a signal from heaven when to enter on their work.

Mr. Mede, Mr. Lowman, Mr. Cuninghame, and Mr. Elliott, exhibit the form seated on the cloud as the Son of God. But that is forbidden by the manner in which he is designated. It was natural anterior to the incarnation of the eternal Word, in representing him as in the vision of Daniel, vii. 13, as invested after his incarnation and exaltation with the dominion of the earth, to describe him as like a son of man, or one of the human race. That delineation, and his investiture with the empire of the earth, define him as the incarnate and glorified Word. But after his incarnation, resurrection in glory, and exaltation to the throne, to represent him as like a son of man, were but to resemble him to himself. The comparison would add nothing to our previous knowledge. On the other hand, if the incarnate and glorified Redeemer be the being to whom the symbolic agent is resembled, then the comparison is natural, and conveys the most important information, as it denotes that that agent is a saint raised from death, in a splendor of form and aspect like that of the glorified Redeemer. In all the instances moreover in which the Son of God appears in the visions, he is designated by titles and characteristics that distinguish him from all other beings, and show indisputably that he is the incarnate Word. And finally, it is inconsistent with his dignity and supremacy, to suppose him to be notified by an angel when to harvest the earth. Angels are his ministers, not his directors.

Vitringa and some others regard the reaping as symbolizing a punishment and destruction of men by judgments. But that is to interpret the term by its metaphorical use in other passages of Scripture, and to violate the law which requires a limitation of the import ascribed to symbols, to that which properly belongs to them and the terms with which they are associated, independently of their use in other passages. There is nothing in a harvest or vintage, which necessarily implies, that when used as symbols, those who are the subjects of them are to be destroyed. They are not necessarily processes of destruction, nor in order to the destruction of what would otherwise continue to subsist unchanged; but rather of collection and preservation, in order to appropriation to some subsequent use. Whether, therefore, they are used as symbols of a gathering for destruction or not, is to be determined, not by themselves, but by adventitious terms, and

representations connected with them. Thus the vintage is shown to be in order to destruction, by the representation that the clusters are thrown into the great wine-press of God's wrath. But as no such representation is made in respect to the harvest, there is no ground in the symbol itself for the ascription to it of such a meaning. Instead, that omission implies that the end for which the subjects of the harvest are gathered, is different from that for which those who are symbolized by the grapes are reaped; and that they are saints therefore; and this is corroborated by Christ's representation that he is to send forth his messengers to gather together his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other; and by the parable of the judgment in which he exhibits the sheep as separated from the goats.

Mr. Daubuz regarded the harvest as symbolizing the Reformation; the being seated on the cloud as representing Luther; and the angel who addressed him as denoting the princes by whom he was aided. But that is wholly to misrepresent the Reformation and the agency of its authors. Luther was a sower of the seed, not a reaper of the harvest. The supposition that the form throned on the cloud symbolizes him, is inconsistent with the representation that he was like one of the human race; as that comparison implies that he differed in some important respect from man as he exists on earth. The princes who aided Luther by their swords, and the usurpation of dominion over the faith and worship of their subjects, were of the body symbolized by the ten-horned wild beast, not an angel coming out of the temple of God in heaven. The harvest and vintage are founded on the mature and fixed character of their subjects, but the Reformation was a change of principles and practice. And finally, there was no such separation of the good and evil at the Reformation, as is denoted by the harvest and vintage. The Protestants and papists continued as before to live together promiscuously, under the same laws, sustaining similar relations to the civil rulers, rendering them the same service, and concurring still in the zealous maintenance of many most pernicious errors.

Mr. Cuninghame regards the subjects of the harvest as the innumerable multitude of the seventh chapter, having palms in their hands; and the reaping as representing their being gathered together and transfigured, in order to deliverance from the destruction which is to descend on the idolatrous in the papal empire, and the worshippers of false gods in other nations. But he founds that construction on the erroneous assumption that the personage seated on the cloud, is the Son of God. The language

moreover, in which the gathering together of the elect is foretold, Matthew xxiv. 30, is not fraught with any indication that it is in order to their transfiguration, and assumption to heaven; nor is there any intimation that those who are to be transfigured, are to be gathered together in order to that change. Instead, the representation in Matthew xiii. 30, 41-43, implies that it is after the destruction of the enemies of God, that the righteous are to be raised to glory; and it is probably at a much later period.

SECTION XXXVIII.

CHAPTER XIV. 17-20.

THE VINTAGE.

AND another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel went from the altar, having power over the fire, and he cried with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are ripe. And the angel thrust his sickle to the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city. And blood went out of the wine-press up to the horses' bridles for a thousand six hundred furlongs.

The scene presented to the apostle in this vision,—probably the same as in the former,—was the city by which the apostate hierarchies are represented, surrounded by the symbolic earth covered with harvest-fields and vineyards. The harvest had been reaped and gathered into storehouses, the grapes had become ripe and ready for the vintage.

The procedure of the angel with the sickle from the temple in heaven, and descent to the earth, signifies that those whom he represents are to go from the divine presence, and are, therefore, angels. The fire of the altar by which the sacrificial victims were consumed, is a symbol of the instruments of avenging justice. The injunction by the angel having power over the fire, to gather the vine of the earth, implies, therefore, that those whom the clusters represent, are to be gathered for vengeance, and thence are the worshippers of the wild beast and its image. That the

grapes of the earth and the harvest were ripe, denotes that the principles of the two classes which they represent, are fully developed and defined, and their character settled and made conspicuous as worshippers of God, or apostates, so that it is manifest that his dispensations towards them, are in conformity with their dispositions and conduct. The dejection of the vine into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, signifies that those whom the vine symbolizes are to be crushed by the vengeance of the Almighty. The treading of the wine-press outside of the city, the symbol of the nationalized hierarchies, denotes that the grapes are from their vineyards, and represent those, therefore, who have been subject to their control and devoted to their use. The river of blood flowing from the press, indicates the visibility and the vastness of the destruction.

This symbol, then, foreshows that angels are to descend from the divine presence, and gather together the incorrigible enemies of God, who have been devoted to the apostate hierarchies, in order to their destruction. It is a different gathering, therefore, from that at Armageddon, where the wild beast and false prophet are to be taken; as that is to be prompted by the unclean spirits, this by angels. That, moreover, is to precede the seventh trumpet, this is undoubtedly to follow it. That is to be voluntary, this by compulsion. It is the gathering, therefore, probably foreshown in the parable of the goats, in which those who have evinced their want of a proper disposition towards Christ, by refusing to succor his brethren when persecuted by the wild beast and false prophet, are to be judged and destroyed; and is to embrace those only, as the parable implies, who have acted in that relation, dwelt within the territory of the great city, owned her jurisdiction, furnished her with her resources, and supported her in her tyrannies.

The dejection of the vine into the press, is a different work from the treading. The former is the act of the reapers. The latter, we are shown in the nineteenth chapter, is to be the work of the Son of God. The period is to be after the fall of the city and the destruction of the wild beast and false prophet, as it is to follow the harvest, of which the risen and glorified saints are to be the reapers, and, therefore, is to be after the visible advent of the Son of God. The wild beast and false prophet are first to be taken alive and cast into the lake of fire. Their armies, the whole organized array of their supporters, are next to be slain. Then as a shepherd, Christ is to gather and judge the nations who have acted in an immediate relation to him as Messiah, and assign the true

worshippers to everlasting life, and tread the apostates in the wine-press of wrath.

Mr. Brightman regarded the vintage as symbolizing the suppression of the monastic institutions of England by Henry VIII., and confiscation of their property ; the angel from the temple as Cromwell, the king's vicegerent in ecclesiastical affairs ; the angel having power over the fire of the altar, as archbishop Cranmer. But the grapes are the symbols of human beings, not of the relations of such beings, their lands, houses, and other wealth. Henry VIII. was the head of one of the dynasties represented by the horns of the wild beast, not the treader of this wine-press. Cromwell belonged to the body of that wild beast, and Cranmer was of the hierarchy of the national church, and thence of the body denoted by great Babylon. They were not angels of the divine presence, therefore. And finally, the dispersion of the monks and nuns, and confiscation of their property, took place three hundred years and more before the close of the wild beast's reign ; but the period assigned to the vintage is to be after its judgment and destruction.

The supposition of Mr. Daubuz, that the vintage foreshows a war on the Catholic church by Protestant states prompted by Reformed ministers, is equally erroneous. He finds it on the assumption that the temple in heaven in which the Almighty was throned, is a symbol of the state of the church on earth, as established and protected by a civil government. He thence regards the angel with the sickle coming out of the temple, as a prince coming out of a Protestant state ; and the angel at the altar, as a symbol of Reformed ministers, exciting him to war. But that is to make the angels of the temple in heaven, symbols of the antichristian rulers and apostate teachers represented in the Apocalypse by the ten-horned wild beast, the wild beast of two horns, and the image. All princes, who, since the rise of the ten kingdoms, tyrannize over the church, and embark in religious wars, and all nationalized ecclesiastics who prompt such wars, belong indisputably to the array represented by those symbols. The witnesses of God do not resort to the sword for aggression or defence. They destroy their enemies only by the fire that proceeds out of their mouth. To relinquish or distrust that weapon and become warriors and persecutors, were to forfeit their office as witnesses. Nor is the temple in heaven a symbol of a state of the church on earth established by civil governments, or in any relation to political powers. Visible objects are never symbols of mere relations. There is no analogy between them. Nor is the temple in heaven, in which the

Almighty is throned and receives the homage of the angelic hosts, a symbol of the relations of a nationalized church to its civil government. They are not only without resemblance and absolutely dissimilar, but the supposition is the most monstrous that can be conceived ; as it implies that the throne also is on earth, and the being who occupies it ; that he is also a visible, and thence a human agent ; and as he is the object of religious homage, the head, therefore, of the apostate church, the usurper of the empire, and the rival of the Almighty.

Mr. Mede and Mr. Cuninghame exhibit the vintage as the same as the gathering and destruction of the kings of the earth and their armies, at the battle of Armageddon. But that is to be instigated by the unclean spirits, and is to be voluntary ; this is to be caused by angels, and is to be by compulsion. That is to be in order to a battle ; this in order to a judgment and destruction.

SECTION XXXIX.

CHAPTER XV. 1-4.

THE VICTORS ON THE GLASSY SEA.

AND I saw another sign in heaven, great and wonderful : seven angels having the last seven plagues, because in them the wrath of God is finished. And I saw as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire ; and they who were victorious from the wild beast, and from its image, and from the number of its name, stationed on the glassy sea, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb ; saying, Great and wonderful thy works, O Lord God Almighty ; just and true thy ways, King of the nations. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name as alone holy ; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee, because thy judgments have been made manifest.

The whole of this spectacle was in heaven. The sea, as is seen from chap. iv. 6, was a space in front of the throne, and exterior therefore to the elders. It resembled, from its transparent pavement interspangled with gems, a smooth, watery expanse, refracting the red glow of sunset, or the crimson tints of the sky. Its comparison to a sea indicates an extent far too great for the

interior of the temple. It was doubtless a vast area extending from its front, and implies a corresponding greatness of the host stationed on it. They are the victorious from the conflict with the wild beast, and with its image, and with the number of its name ;—the vast crowd of witnesses who have held the testimony of Jesus, and refused submission to those antichristian powers, through the long period of their triumph ; neither having sanctioned the civil rulers in their usurpation of the prerogatives of God, obeyed the apostate hierarchies as of the authority which they claim, nor, through fear of persecution, suppressed their dissent, and yielded a nominal submission to their sway, which is the victory over its name doubtless, in distinction from the victory over the wild beast and its image. That they thus chant the wisdom and rectitude of the Almighty when about to judge those usurping and persecuting powers, indicates a vast intelligence of the reasons of that great measure of his administration, a realization of its necessity to his vindication, and an understanding of the salutary impressions it is to make on the universe. They have harps of God, given by him, and devoted to his praise ; and they sing the song of Moses, as it is like his a celebration of the greatness, wonderfulness, and justice of the divine ways ; and the song of the Lamb, as he is the Lord the God Almighty, who has exercised the government of the universe during the triumph of the wild beast, and the King of the nations who is now to judge that usurper, take possession of the earth, and bring all its tribes to obedience. Their song, Great and wonderful thy works, O Lord the God Almighty, just and true thy ways, King of the nations, is an adoring acknowledgment that it was in boundless wisdom that he had through so many ages allowed the triumph of the wild beast, and persecution and slaughter of his witnesses, and that spotless rectitude and truth had marked all his dispensations towards them in their conflict with that usurping power, and were now to mark the avenging judgments by which he was to destroy it. The question, Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name as alone holy, implies that the grounds on which he proceeds are to be so fully made known, and the greatness and wisdom of the results of his administration, that none can resist the demonstration of his benevolence and skill, or escape the conviction that he alone is adequate to conduct the government of his empire, all-knowing, all-wise, all-good, almighty ; that all the objections of his enemies are groundless, and all the doubts, the fears, the perplexities of his people without foundation ; while the prophecy, All nations shall come and worship

before thee, because thy judgments have been made manifest, implies that the terrific inflictions by which he is to destroy his great antagonists, are to be seen by the nations to be a vindication of himself, and be the means of awakening them from unbelief, convincing them of his being, perfections, rights, and dominion, and bringing them to yield him acknowledgment and homage.

How sublime the ascriptions of this song from those who had endured the most cruel persecution for his sake; and whom to human eyes he often seemed to have deserted, and left without pity to the malice of their enemies! Not one of that long train of witnesses and martyrs but joins in the strain. What a sense it bespeaks of the rightfulness of his sovereignty! What an acquaintance with the reasons of his procedure! What a comprehension of the results that are to spring from the manifestation that men are allowed to make of their hostility to him, and from the exhibition of his righteousness towards them! What a knowledge and realization that his ways, which have seemed most inscrutable, are to become invested at length in the eyes of all his children with dazzling light and beauty, contribute to the resistless energy of his government, subserve the conversion of the nations, and add forever to the grandeur and blessedness of his empire!

Mr. Brightman and Vitringa regarded the harpers as symbolizing believers on earth. But that is to make the temple in heaven the representative of a temple or place of worship on earth, the Deity a symbol of some visible being worshipped in it, and the homage therefore of the victors over the beast, the symbol of an idolatrous homage.

SECTION XL.

CHAPTER XV. 5-8.

THE SEVEN ANGELS WITH THE SEVEN VIALS.

AND after these I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And the seven angels who held the seven plagues came out of the temple clothed in pure resplendent linen, and bound with golden girdles around the breasts. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven

golden vials filled with the wrath of God who livès forever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power : And no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished.

The temple of the tabernacle which was opened, was the inner temple, in which was the throne of the Almighty, as is shown by the apostle's witnessing the delivery to the angels of the vials by one of the four living creatures, whose station was in the inner temple. The angels stood in the outer sanctuary, obviously from their being seen by the apostle before the inner temple was opened. Their white robes and golden girdles denote their rectitude and dignity. The delivery to them of the vials by one of the living creatures, indicates that the august attendants in the presence of God whom they represent, are cognizant of his avenging judgments. The smoke from his glory and from his power, with which the temple was filled during the effusion of the vials, so that no one could enter it, denotes that the awful displays of his justice and sovereignty, which the destruction of his enemies is to form, are to strike the heavenly hosts with the profoundest sense of their infinite distance from him, the inflexibleness of his rectitude, and the helplessness of his enemies, and fill them with awe and submission. They imply also that no incense symbolic of supplications by the saints on earth for the salvation of his antichristian foes, or the suspension of his judgments, is to be offered, during that period ; and that they are to be felt therefore by the church on earth, as well as the redeemed in heaven, and the angelic hosts, to be indispensable to his vindication, and the great measures of grace that are to follow.

Mr. Whiston and Mr. Cuninghame, exhibit the opening of the temple after the song of the victors, as the same as its opening at the sound of the seventh trumpet ; and as denoting therefore the coincidence in time of that trumpet and the first vial. But that assumption is erroneous. That the inner temple was opened more than once, is indisputable from the consideration that it must have been open, whenever the throne, the living creatures, and the elders were visible to the apostle, as in the visions of the fourth and fifth chapters, the opening of the seals, and the innumerable multitude having palms. That it was closed after the opening of the seventh seal, and remained shut during the first six trumpets is probable ; as there is no indication of its being open in the following visions until that of the sealed in the fourteenth chapter, who are exhibited as singing a new song before the throne and before the living creatures and elders.

But their resurrection and assumption to heaven, it is expressly represented in the eleventh chapter, are to precede the seventh trumpet. It is indisputably certain, therefore, that the temple is to be opened before the seventh trumpet. But as it was to be opened also before the effusion of the first vial, and as neither the resurrection nor sealing of the witnesses has yet taken place, although that vial was long since poured, it is certain also that it is to be opened before the resurrection of the witnesses.

But the supposition that the first vial and last trumpet commence at the same period, is wholly irreconcilable in other relations with the representations of the prophecy. The last vial and last trumpet are cotemporaneous doubtless, from the similarity of the announcement, and the events that follow them. The assumption therefore that the first vial is cotemporaneous with that trumpet, involves the assumption that it is cotemporaneous with the last vial. Mr. Cuninghame, accordingly, represents the seven as poured at the same moment. But that is as irreconcilable with the symbols, as a similar supposition would be in respect to the seals, or the trumpets. They are as clearly exhibited as successive, as the seals and trumpets are. The symbols which follow them, differ as widely from each other, as those which follow the trumpets. If they are poured at the same moment, and the events which follow take place in the same scene, as they must spring from what must appear to be a complex cause, not from causes independent and dissimilar, no reason can be conceived for their symbolization under seven vials in place of one. And finally, the events of the French revolution of which Mr. Cuninghame regards the first five as symbols, did not commence at the same moment, but were as clearly distinguished by a difference of period as of nature.

SECTION XLI.

CHAPTER XVI. 1-2.

THE FIRST VIAL.

AND I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, Go and pour the seven vials of the wrath of God on the earth. And the first went and poured his vial on the land; and an evil and noxious ulcer came on the men who have the mark of the wild beast, and who worship its image.

The office of the seven angels, is simply to assist the revelation, by designating the commencement of the seven judgments, and distinguishing them as inflictions of divine wrath; not to symbolize the agents on earth by whom they are caused. Their direction by a voice from the temple to pour out their vials, indicates that the appointment by the Most High of the great judgments which were symbolized by the phenomena following their effusion, was to be publicly announced in heaven.

The land or earth, when distinguished from the sea, rivers, fountains, and heaven, denotes the population of an empire under a settled government, anterior to the commencement of a political agitation. The men on whom this vial fell, were those who have the mark of the wild beast. They live under and support the governments therefore that are symbolized by that monster, and are inhabitants accordingly of the ten kingdoms. They worship its image also, and either live therefore under the dominion of the nationalized Catholic hierarchies, or acknowledge their authority, and offer their worship. The shower from the vial excited on those on whom it fell, a malignant and infectious ulcer, irritating to them, and dangerous to those who came within their influence.

The ulcer is symbolic, and denotes an analogous disease of the mind; a restlessness and rancor of passion exasperated by agitating and noxious principles and opinions, that fill it with a sense of obstruction, degradation, and misery, resembling the torture of an ulcerated body.

This vial is referred by most recent English commentators to the first step in the French revolution. And no symbol can be conceived more suited to represent the restlessness under injury, the ardor of resentment, hate, and revenge, the noxiousness and contagion of false principles and opinions, that marked the commencement of the political disquiets and agitations of the European states, toward the close of the last century. The eruption of the ulcer on the vassals of the wild beast and worshippers of its image, indicates that the mental disease which it symbolizes, was to be felt in their relations to those civil and ecclesiastical powers; and it was from them that the exasperation sprang which led the French nation to overthrow their ancient government, and prompted similar revolutionary movements in all the neighboring kingdoms. The middle and lower classes universally in France, were suddenly seized with an insupportable sense of their oppression by the monarchy, of their degradation to the condition of dependants and serfs by the nobles, of the

extortions, robberies, and violences to which they were wantonly subjected by every class of superiors, of the deceptions and tyranny practised on them by the church, and of their hopeless obstruction from the improvement of which they were capable, and denial in every form of the happiness to which they were entitled. This torturing realization which sprung irresistibly from the consideration of their relations to the government, to which they were called by its embarrassments, and the prospect of new burdens in order to remedy and support its extravagance, was roused to a tenfold energy and made the means of inflaming their hatred and revenge to exasperation, and ambition and hope to madness, by the opinion to which it gave birth, that the power of the monarch, the princes, the nobility, and the ecclesiastics, was a sheer usurpation, a stupendous violation of their rights, and an atrocious crime therefore demanding instant resistance and condign punishment.¹

With this denial of the title of the king, the nobles, and the ecclesiastics, to their rank and authority, and assertion of the absolute equality of all in right and political power, were mingled new, false, and fanatical theories of liberty, property, government, religion, and national glory, which raised the most extravagant dreams of the possibility of happiness under a democratic rule, and inflamed ambition to a phrensy by the prospect to individuals of power, conspicuity, and grandeur. These principles and sentiments flashed instantaneously like the gleam of a meteor over the whole kingdom, roused that excitable and passionate people universally to the utmost fervor of impatience under the real and imaginary burden of the superior ranks, and kindled a fanatic desire to disencumber themselves of the weight, and emerge to freedom and independence. Awakened thus to a full sense of their oppressions, deluded into false views of the proper remedy, and inflamed with extravagant hope, they were tortured by their relations to the monarchy, aristocracy, and church, with a violence of misery, like men whom some noxious element has touched, and covered with a burning eruption.

But the exasperating vial fell not alone on that kingdom. France received its first and its largest tempest. But the angel, scattering a shower on Belgium, Holland, and the valley of the Rhine, crossed the Alps, steeping height and recess in the bitter flood, drenched the vales and plains of Italy, swept around over the German empire and the British isles, and finally, dashed the vengeance dregs on the peninsula of Portugal and Spain, and

¹ Alison's Hist. vol. i. chap. 2.

the distant southern shores of this continent. The whole circuit of the ten kingdoms thus became the scene, in a degree, of a similar dissatisfaction with the established governments, fanatical theories of liberty and equality, and wild and desperate projects of demagogueism and revolution.

The commencement of the effusion may with probability be dated as early as 1786, when the convocation of the French Notables to remedy the financial embarrassments of the government, drew the eyes of the whole people to the extravagances of the monarchy, and arbitrary domination of the nobles and ecclesiastics. The approach of new exactions and prospect of interminable oppression, roused them to the expression of their sentiments, and gave scope to the democratic speculations which, in 1789, produced the assembly of the states-general.

Grotius and Dr. Hammond, in their usual manner, regard the symbol as denoting a literal plague, or pestilence. But that is to make the representative and thing represented of the same species.

Mr. Brightman interprets it of the malice and envy of the pope, the bishops, and other chief ecclesiastics, princes, and nobles, excited by the ejection of the papists in England from office, and elevation of the Protestants to power, during the reign of Elizabeth. But that is to exhibit the vial as poured on the two wild beasts and the hierarchies, in place of those who have the mark of the beast, and worship its image.

Mr. Mede interprets it of the chagrin and exasperation of the Catholics, at the exposure and denunciation of their errors by the Waldenses, Albigenses, Wickliffites, Hussites, and others. But that is to exhibit the vial as poured on the apostates as vassals of the false prophet only, not also, as the prophecy represents, as worshippers of the wild beast. It was in their civil relations in a higher degree than in their ecclesiastical, that they felt the influence of the vial. The exposition by Cocceius, who refers it to the dissensions and divisions of the Catholics through a long succession of ages, is open to similar objections.

Mr. Daubuz, Mr. Jurieu, and Vitringa, regard it as denoting the extreme corruption of the apostate church, and refer it to the middle ages, when superstition and idolatry reached their height. But the ulcer is not an element of the corruption of the church, or one of its settled characteristics, but a peculiar infliction because of its depravity. It is a plague too that falls on men who are the vassals of the civil governments and nationalized hierarchies, not on kings, princes, nobles, and ecclesias-

tical dignitaries; and is not common therefore to the corrupt church at large, rulers as well as ruled, as are its false doctrines, superstitions, and idolatries. It is, moreover, a torture in regard to which, as in a corporeal disease, they are in a large degree passive; and not, therefore, a mere depravity of principles and practice, in which they are voluntary.

Mr. Cuninghame interprets it of the spirit of atheism, anarchy, and insubordination, which marked the French revolution; Mr. Faber and Mr. Keith, of the infidelity; and Mr. Elliott, of "the outbreak of democratic fury, atheism, and vice, which characterized that event." But atheism, infidelity, lawlessness, and vice, were common to the nobles and ecclesiastics, as well as the philosophers, demagogues, and rabble; while the torturing eruption was limited to those who have the mark of the wild beast and worship its image; and thence denotes an evil that was peculiar to the subjects of the civil governments and nationalized Catholic hierarchies, in distinction from those bodies, and that sprung therefore from their relations to their political and ecclesiastical superiors; and was that torturing sense of oppression undoubtedly to which I have referred it, antagonism of principles, wishes, and designs, and exasperation of hate, which were the first and most violent surges of that terrible social tempest. That eruption of rancorous passion exhibits all the characteristics of the symbol. The middle and lower orders were its subjects, in contradistinction from the superior. It was directed against the civil and ecclesiastical rulers; it was in a large degree involuntary, it was torturing, it was contagious and deadly.

SECTION XLII.

CHAPTER XVI. 3.

THE SECOND VIAL.

AND the second angel poured his vial on the sea; and it became blood as of one dead; and every creature of life died in the sea.

The sea denotes the population of a central or principal kingdom, in violent commotion. Wherever the drops, showered from the vase, fell on the waters, they became gore, as though

one had bled there to death. The expanse became spotted with blood, like a vast battle-field, over which thousands recently slaughtered are strown; and all orders of animals to which the waters had before been congenial and the source of sustenance, were destroyed by them. The blood-spots on the waves, denote both that their blood whom the waters represent was to be shed, and that they were to shed the blood of others, sustaining a relation to them like that of fish to the waters which they inhabit, and besmear themselves with slaughter. This is implied in the color of the waves independently of the death of the creatures, and in their causing their death; and is shown in the representation under the third vial, that those who are symbolized by the rivers and fountains, are compelled to make blood their drink, or maintain their own life by the slaughter of others.

The sea is to the animals that live in it, and derive from it their nourishment, what a people is to the monarch, nobles, ecclesiastical dignitaries, and other influential orders, who owe to them their station and support. The bloodiness of the water therefore, through which all creatures inhabiting it died, indicates that those slaughterers of one another, whom the waves represent, are also to destroy all orders of their superiors.

This symbol denotes the second great act in the tragedy of the French revolution, in which the people slaughtered one another in feuds, insurrections, and civil wars; and exterminated with the dagger, the bayonet, and the guillotine, all the influential ranks—king and queen, nobles and prelates, civil magistrates and priests, military commanders and soldiers, persons of illustrious descent, of distinguished reputation, of talents and wealth; and demagogues, politicians, and chiefs, who rose to conspicuity and influence by their acts as revolutionists. The slaughter commenced in the attack on the Bastille on the 14th of July, 1789. Similar violences were soon after perpetrated in every part of the kingdom. The people of the rural districts rose generally in insurrection and slaughtered the nobles, their families, and their supporters. The Parisian mob in October, attacked the palace at Versailles, and killed several soldiers, and on the 10th of August of the following year, slaughtered the king's guards, and drove him from the throne. In August, 1792, the revolutionary tribunal was established; and the extermination of the influential ranks commenced on a vast scale, and continued till not only the king, the queen, the princes, the nobles, the prelates, and thousands of their conspicuous supporters, were destroyed, but a great part of the leaders also of the rev-

olution. In the civil war of La Vendée alone, a million of persons of all ranks and ages, are said to have perished.¹

Mr. Brightman expounds the sea of the council of Trent, and its bloodiness of their doctrinal errors. But the sea is the symbol of a people in their political relations, not of an ecclesiastical council; and blood is indicative of a death by violence, not by disease.

Mr. Mede interprets the sea of the Catholic church, and the blood, of its laceration and dismemberment by the secession of multitudes and nations at the Reformation. But the sea is the symbol of a nation in its civil relations, not in its ecclesiastical. It is as worshippers of the beast, not as vassals of the false prophet, that those whom the waves denote are stained with blood; and the blood denotes their slaughter of one another, not their conversion to the true faith.

Mr. Jurieu interprets the slaughter of the crusades. But that is not in conformity with the symbol. It is to represent the waters as removed to a distance in order to be tinged with blood, instead of receiving the coloring element in their usual position.

Mr. Daubuz regards the animals that died as symbolizing the crusaders, but that is to assume that they died by leaving the sea, instead of being killed by the agency of the waters.

Vitringa refers the symbol to the wars of the Ghibelines and Guelphs. But they were struggles between the emperor and pope and their respective parties for political supremacy. There was no extermination by the people of all their civil and ecclesiastical superiors.

Mr. Faber refers it to the reign of terror during the French revolution. Mr. Cuninghame regards it as denoting the slaughter of the French nation, without any consideration of their rank, not only by their own hands, but by those with whom they embarked in war, from the commencement of the revolution to the overthrow of the empire. But that is to overlook the distinction between the sea, which represents the tumultuary multitude and the animals supported in it, which symbolize the superior orders. It is to disregard the representation also, that it was by the agency of the bloody water that all creatures of life were destroyed, not in any degree by their migration to the streams and fountains. The sea denotes only the destroying multitude: the animals destroyed, those of a different rank or relation whom they put to death, as the princes, nobles, priests, legislators, magistrates, military commanders, soldiers, demagogues, and

¹ Alison's Hist., vol. i. chap. 6; vol. ii. chap. 10, 14, 15, 17.

whoever assumed the attitude of resistance to their will, or became the objects of their envy or dread. Those domestic slaughters are said to have amounted, ere the close of 1795, to two millions.

Mr. Keith regards the symbol as foreshowing the maritime wars that followed the French revolution; Mr. Elliott as indicating not only the destruction of fleets and merchant ships, but also the revolutions and slaughters in the French, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies. But that is to exhibit the symbolic sea and that which it denotes as of the same species; which is against analogy. It implies, also, that the creatures destroyed by the waters were literally those that inhabit them, and overthrows therefore his own exposition. It is to represent them, also, as killing one another in place of being destroyed by the crimsoned waters, which is to contradict the representation of the symbol. It is also to assume that actions of the same kinds, and of the same agents, and exerted at the same periods, are discriminated from each other, and represented by different and successive symbols, simply because some of them are exerted on water, or in its vicinity, and the others on land, which is wholly without authority, and a total misrepresentation of the reason for which different symbols are used. The diversity of symbols is in order to a representation of the diversity of agents and events which they foreshow; not of their geographical scene. They are exhibited in succession, not simultaneously, because the agents which they denote commence their agency at different periods, not cotemporaneously. To assume that the diversity of symbolic agents and actions is no indication of a difference of the agents and events represented, but only of the scene in which they are to appear, is to divest them of all their peculiar character, and reduce them to insignificance.

SECTION XLIII.

CHAPTER XVI. 4-7.

THE THIRD VIAL.

AND the third poured his vial into the rivers and into the fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Righteous art thou who art and who wast, the holy, that

thou hast adjudged these things : for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets ; and thou hast given them blood to drink. They are worthy. And I heard another at the altar say, Yea, O Lord, the God Almighty, true and just are thy judgments.

Rivers and fountains are to a sea what smaller exterior communities and nations are to a great central people. As the French nation was the sea, the rivers and fountains are the smaller communities and remote nations of the other apocalyptic kingdoms. The blood with which the rivers and fountains ran wherever the shower of the vial fell, denotes that their blood whom the waters symbolize was to be shed, and that they also were to shed the blood of others, as is shown by the representation that blood was to be made their drink,—a means by which they should gratify their passions, and be nourished, and continue to subsist, and the blood therefore of foreigners drawn in repressing their invasions. The exclamation of the angel who poured the vial on the waters, and the response of the angel at the altar, show that the rivers and fountains symbolize nations ; that the nations who were to suffer and inflict the slaughters indicated by the blood, had persecuted the saints and witnesses of God, and shed their blood ; and that the destruction to which they were doomed was to be in retribution of their crimes as persecutors, and was righteous, and was to be regarded and celebrated as such by the heavenly hosts.

This symbol denotes the vast bloodshed in the other apocalyptic kingdoms, in the insurrections and wars that sprung out of the French revolution. That destructive contest was commenced by the French with Austria on the 20th of April, 1792, and soon extended to Holland, Sardinia, Russia, Italy, Spain, England, Prussia, Switzerland, Denmark, and Portugal, and continued with little intermission for more than twenty years, in which the blood of millions of the French was poured out on the soil of the other kingdoms ; millions of the other nations slain in resisting their aggressions ; and vast multitudes of the unarmed of both sexes put to death in the violences of revolution, the siege and sack of cities, and the repression of insurrections. All those nations had been persecutors of the saints and prophets, and blood was given them to drink. War became their trade, and the means by which they maintained their national existence.

Mr. Mede interpreted the rivers and fountains of the active agents of the beast and false prophet, as the Spanish soldiers in Belgium and the Jesuits in England, and deemed the symbolization fulfilled in their obstruction and slaughter in the sixteenth

century. But that is to contradict the symbol. Streams and fountains are not agents of the sea sent forth into other lands. Their current is towards the sea, not in the opposite direction.

Mr. Faber and Mr. Cuninghame interpret the symbol of the wars generally of the French revolution; Mr. Keith and Mr. Elliott of the battles of those wars that took place on the rivers and at their sources.

SECTION XLIV.

CHAPTER XVI. 8, 9.

THE FOURTH VIAL.

AND the fourth poured his vial on the sun; and it was given to it to scorch the men with fire. And the men were scorched with great heat. And they blasphemed the name of God, who has power over these plagues, and changed not to give him glory.

Those who exercise the government of a kingdom, are to the people whom they rule, what the sun is to the land and sea. Their office is to subserve the well-being of their subjects, by protecting their persons, securing to them the fruits of their industry, maintaining their rights, and aiding them to the cultivation and happiness for which they are formed; as the office of the sun is to yield that measure of light and heat which is most favorable to vegetable and animal life. But when they usurp or acquire extraordinary power, and employ it in the violent oppression of their people, robbing them of their property, obstructing their industry, depriving them of freedom, and overwhelming them with the miseries of violence, poverty, and servitude, they become to the victims of their tyranny, what the sun would be to men, were its rays raised to a scorching heat. The symbol denotes, therefore, that the rulers of the people on whom the judgments foreshown by the former vials chiefly fell, were to become armed with extraordinary and destructive powers, and employ them in the most violent and insupportable oppression; and that the victims of their tyranny would blaspheme the name of God, who appoints those sufferings in punishment of their crimes against him, and not change to give him glory.

The extraordinary powers with which the revolutionary rulers

of France became armed, and the oppressions with which they scorched and devoured that people through a period of more than twenty years, present a signal counterpart to the symbol. Immediately after the declaration of war in 1792, they assumed and began to exercise the most absolute and despotic sway over the persons and property of the people. The whole of the males capable of bearing arms, of the ages from twenty to forty-five, were rendered subject to military conscription, and many hundreds of thousands forced into the army. A host of commissioners appointed to collect materials for the war, provisions, and revenue, were invested with authority to seize whatever property they pleased for the public service, and exercised their power in the most wanton and oppressive manner. They who were thus robbed of their money, their merchandise, their cattle, their grain, their furniture, and every description of effects, were compelled to accept for payment, the paper currency of the government at par, though wholly irredeemable, and much of the time worth but fifteen, ten, five, and even a lower per cent. A maximum, or extreme of prices for all kinds of produce and merchandise was fixed by law, and all parties constrained under penalty of death, to sell at those rates for the depreciated national paper. That currency was made a legal tender in all transactions between citizens, and between the treasury and those in the public service, by which creditors were defrauded of their dues, laborers of their wages, and the officers and soldiers of their stipends. A war of plunder, confiscation, and slaughter was waged against the rich from mere envy and avarice, and thousands of families reduced from affluence to beggary.¹ Extra loans and contributions were exacted from the wealthy without any equivalent, and the creditors of the government at length, by laws compelling them to surrender a portion of their claims, and by the national bankruptcy, defrauded wholly of their dues, amounting to several thousands of millions of dollars. A vast array of spies and cut-throats was organized throughout the kingdom, whose office was to watch, intimidate, rob, accuse, and guillotine whoever was obnoxious, and the property, person, and life of every individual subjected to the caprice of millions of demons inflamed with an infuriate ambition to plunder, to torture, and to destroy whoever was superior to themselves. This vast system of oppression reduced the whole nation to the most abject wretchedness. All commercial pursuits were interrupted, and all branches of industry embarrassed. The poor left without occupation by the destruction

¹ Alison's Hist. vol. ii. chap. 9.

of their wealthy employers, were reduced to beggary. The agriculturists, without assurance of a remuneration for their labor, ceased to raise the requisite supply for the national sustenance. Vast crowds were thence reduced to the misery of scarcity and the danger of starvation. A large proportion of the population of Paris was for years fed from the public magazines, and suffered all the horrors of famine.¹ No one knew when he rose in the morning, that he should not become the victim of the assassin, the mob, or the guillotine, before night. No one at night knew but he should be robbed of his property, his family, or his friends, before morning. Every species of misery with which the wicked are ever scourged by an avenging providence, was thus inflicted on the nation by their rulers, and in an extreme degree. No oppressions of a whole people the world has ever witnessed, approach this in severity. The condition, generally, of even the helots of Greece, the captives and bondmen of Rome, the serfs of the feudal barons, the slaves of the West Indies, was one of freedom, safety, and happiness, compared to that of the French, thus robbed of their property, deprived of the power of earning a subsistence, reduced to starvation, and subjected absolutely in person and life, to the will of millions of tyrants, whose aim was by oppression, outrage, slaughter, and terror, to stifle every effort at extrication from their power, and quench every spark of liberty and independence.

Every country, also, which they conquered or invaded, was devastated by a similar sway, public and private property of every description grasped with insatiable rapacity, the conquered compelled to support and enrich the conquering armies, their cities sacked, their villages destroyed, their cottages burned, their fields strown with desolation, and their families outraged and slaughtered. And though its devouring heat of oppression was mitigated under the consular and imperial rule, the government continued a giant despotism to the fall of the empire, and crushed the people with an iron sway. Yet they blasphemed God who scourged them with those plagues, and changed not to give him glory. So far from being reclaimed from atheism and idolatry, they continued after the example of the national legislature in the early years of the revolution, to deny his existence, disown all responsibility to him, or claim his sanction of their crimes. Not the slightest indication of a change of principles appeared, however scorched by misery, no deprecation of the wrath of God was uttered, no acknowledgment of his righteousness, no recognition of his sway; and

¹ Alison's Hist. vol. ii. chap. 15.

they are still a nation of infidels and apostates. Thus the symbol met, in every respect, in rulers and people, a terrific fulfilment.

Mr. Jurieu regarded the sun as the symbol of the antichristian empire, and its scorching heat as denoting the exorbitant authority and oppressive sway of the papacy, from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. But that is to confound the ecclesiastical with the civil world. The sun is the symbol of the chief rulers of the political empire, and the agency which its scorching men symbolizes, affects them in their relations as vassals of the beast, not as followers of the false prophet.

Cocceius exhibits the sun as the Scriptures, the increase of its heat as the clearer manifestation of their teachings, and the torture it occasioned as the sense of guilt and desperation which the truth awakens in the impenitent; and regards it as denoting the irritation of the Catholics under the proclamation of the gospel by the Waldenses. But that is not in accordance with the symbol. The word of God was not to the Catholics of that age, what the sun is to the natural world; nor is the sun the symbol of the Scriptures, but of the supreme civil powers in an empire.

Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Keith, and many recent writers, interpret the symbol of the oppressions that sprung from the French revolution; Mr. Faber of those only of Bonaparte after his elevation to the throne as emperor.

SECTION XLV.

CHAPTER XVI. 10, 11.

THE FIFTH VIAL.

AND the fifth poured his vial on the throne of the wild beast, and its kingdom was darkened. And they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven for their pains and for their ulcers, and changed not from their works.

The ascription of a throne and a kingdom to the wild beast, shows that that monster is the symbol of the rulers of an empire. The effect of the vial on the throne is not depicted, but only its consequence to the kingdom. It was its subversion however, doubtless, and thence the darkening of the kingdom, by the humiliation of its power, the obscuration of its glory, and the ex-

tion of its hopes. The action of the survivors is such as might naturally spring from the disappointment, the chagrin, the despair, and the rage excited by such a catastrophe. They gnawed their tongues for pain, and continued to blaspheme God by refusing to acknowledge his hand in their overthrow, and denying his existence. That they blasphemed him for their pains, denotes their denial of the justice of the retributions with which their crimes were requited, and denunciation of them as a violation of their rights. That they blasphemed for the ulcers excited by the first vial, denotes both that they were the people on whom that vial chiefly fell, and that against their wishes they were now again to be subjected to the dynasty, to a sense of whose torturing oppressions they were then aroused.

They are the French therefore, and the event indicated by the symbol, is the subversion of the imperial throne and re-establishment of the Bourbon dynasty in 1814 and 1815. All the conditions of the symbol were fulfilled in the conquest of France at that period by the allied armies, expulsion of Bonaparte, and restoration of the ancient line of kings. The kingdom was felt to be shrouded in darkness, its power remedilessly broken, its glory eclipsed, its prospects of greatness extinguished. The new nobility, the officers of government, the soldiers, the people generally, were devoured with chagrin, and blasphemed God with an atheist impiety, by the continued disavowal of his dominion, justification and boast of their crimes, and denial of their merit of such retribution. The Bourbon dynasty was again forced on them by the conquering powers, and revived the torturing sense of their degradation, the violent detestation of that line, and the infuriate passion for unrestrained liberty, denoted by the ulcers, with which they had been smitten under the first vial. And they changed from none of their works. The same lawlessness, the same rapacity, the same thirst of blood, the same ambition of conquest, the same spirit of tyranny, the same audacious atheism, as had marked them through the whole career of the revolution and the wars to which it gave birth, characterized them still.

Mr. Jurieu interprets the throne of the wild beast of Rome, and the darkening of its kingdom, of the removal of the popes from that city to Avignon in the fourteenth century. But that is to confound the head of the two-horned beast and of the image, with the wild beast of ten horns; and make the apostate Roman hierarchy the object of the judgment, in place of the supreme civil and military power of the empire.

Cocceius exhibits the throne of the wild beast as the throne of the pope, and regards the symbol as denoting the rejection of his authority and denunciation of him as antichrist by the Protestants in the sixteenth century, which is open to similar objections.

Mr. Cuninghame regards the throne as a symbol, not of the station of a monarch, the chief of the great combination denoted by the wild beast, but of the power, authority, and councils of an empire, and interprets the darkening of the kingdoms chiefly of the false policy of the French, Austrian, and English rulers, by which they and their people became involved in the calamities that marked and followed the wars that sprung from the French revolution. But that is not in harmony with the symbol. It is to make the throne the representative of agencies, instead of the station of an agent, and is therefore against analogy, as agencies alone can symbolize agencies. As the sun is the symbol of the supreme rulers of the empire, as under the fourth vial, a change in them by which the empire becomes darkened; must be their expulsion from their station, or the discontinuance of their office; as a change in the sun by which the earth should at mid-day become darkened, would be a discontinuance of its rays, not their receiving a wrong direction. The overthrow accordingly of the official station of an agent, presents an apt symbolization of the annihilation of his office, and dissolution of the form of government of which he was the head, but exhibits no analogy to his using his power by misjudgment to the injury of himself or his subjects.

Mr. Elliott interprets the symbol of the spoliation of the property of the Catholic church by the French, Germans, Spaniards, and Portuguese, during the wars of the revolution and temporary abolition by Bonaparte of the papal civil power. But that is to confound both the two-horned wild beast and the image, with the wild beast of seven heads and ten horns. The wild beast on whose throne the vial was poured, and whose kingdom was darkened, is the symbol of the civil rulers of the empire, not of the Catholic hierarchies, nor the false prophet.

Mr. Faber interprets the symbol of the dethronement of the French emperor.

SECTION XLVI.

CHAPTER XVI. 12.

THE SIXTH VIAL.

AND the sixth poured his vial on the great river Euphrates. And its water was dried, that the way might be prepared of the kings who are from the sun's rising.

It was by a diversion of the water of the Euphrates from its channel, that the way was prepared for the entrance beneath the walls of Babylon of the leaders of the Medes and Persians who were from the east, and the subversion of her empire. The river is here used as a symbol in an analogous relation. It is by the diversion or exhaustion of something having a likeness of Euphrates to Babylon, that the way is to be prepared for the assault and overthrow of some resembling kingdom. But great Babylon, the city of which the literal Babylon is the symbol, is the body of rulers and teachers of the churches of the ten kingdoms crected into hierarchies, and nationalized by their governments. Her fall is to be a dejection from her station as civilly established, deprivation of peculiar privileges, and subjection to the condition of a vassal of those governments. The evaporation of her river is doubtless therefore to be the alienation and withdrawal from her of her supporters, by the dissipation of their faith in her pretensions, awe of her authority, and approbation of her rule, by which they have been kept in subjection. The kings from the sun's rising are they who, after having produced that alienation of her supporters, are to assail and precipitate her from her nationalization.

This symbol indicates then, that agencies are to be exerted by which vast crowds of the supporters of the nationalized hierarchies are to be withdrawn from them; the reasons for their support in that relation by the civil government, whether they lie in the faith of the people, or the policy of the rulers, to be removed; and the general mind prepared for their discontinuance as establishments.

This vial has undoubtedly already begun to be poured, and the agents who are to exhaust the great Euphrates of the apostate Babylon commenced their office. The withdrawal of a large body of ministers and members from the Scottish national church, the secession from the Catholic churches of Germany, and the resignation of their office by a portion of the ministers of the Can-

ton de Vaud in Switzerland, are events that accord with the symbolization, and the commencement of movements probably that are at length to reduce the mighty current that has hitherto run beneath the walls of the great city, to a shallow stream or stagnant pool, as Euphrates became by the diversion of its waters into other channels.

The views of those seceders, and the attitude they assume towards the nationalized churches from which they have withdrawn, are wholly unlike those that are to distinguish the sealed. The Scotch withdrew not from a disapprobation of the nationalization of the church, but merely from dislike of the manner in which the civil government exercised its control of the establishment. It was for a similar reason that the Swiss resigned their stations; and the German seceders withdrew not from any dissatisfaction with the relation of the church to the civil government, but from a disapproval of the superstitions, idolatries, and tyranny of the hierarchies themselves.

Mr. Brightman interprets the symbol of the removal of impediments to the restoration of the Jews. But that is in contradiction to the symbol. As the drying of Euphrates by Cyrus was in order to the conquest of Babylon, so the exertion of an analogous agency on the Jews, would be in order to their subjection to greater calamities, not to their restoration to their ancient land, and re-establishment under a national government. The great obstacle moreover to their restoration, is their own unbelief; not the power of a hostile people. But what analogy is there between unbelief and a river which is a source of sustenance and means of defence to a besieged city? There is no indication in the Scriptures that they are to regain their ancient land by war and conquest, nor by the subversion of mystical Babylon. They are not the agents who are to cause the fall of that combination of hierarchies.

Mr. Mede, Mr. Faber, Mr. Cuninghame, Mr. Elliott, and others, regard the drying of Euphrates as denoting the gradual decay of the Turkish empire in population, wealth, and power. But that is equally without analogy. That empire sustains no relation to the nationalized churches of Europe, like that of Euphrates to ancient Babylon. It neither is, nor ever has been the means of supporting them in their station as civil establishments. It is not conceivable that its decay should necessarily involve their dejection from that station. Its relations with professors of Christianity are not with those hierarchies, but with the Greek, the Armenian, the Maronite, and other eastern churches.

Cocceius expounds Babylon of the civil empire, and regards the drying of Euphrates as fulfilled in the exhaustion of the Spanish and French in their wars with each other, and with the Protestants in the sixteenth century. But that is to make the representative and thing represented of the same species. Babylon is not the symbol of a civil power, like that of which it was the seat, but of a combination of nationalized hierarchies.

SECTION XLVII.

CHAPTER XVI. 13-16.

THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS.

AND I saw from the mouth of the dragon, and from the mouth of the wild beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits as frogs; for they are spirits of demons working wonders, that go to the kings of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, that he may not walk naked, and they may see his shame. And they gathered them in the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon.

Unclean demon spirits are demons or devils, which enter into human beings, and excite them to lawless appetite and passion. But these spirits were clothed in forms, as appears from their being compared to frogs;—hideous, grovelling, noisy, and amphibious. The dragon is also a bodied shape, as appears from the ascription to it of a mouth, and procedure from it of a material form. It is the symbol therefore of the rulers of the eastern Roman empire supporting an apostate church, and arrogating the right of dictating the religion of their subjects; and implies that at the period of this event, a government is to subsist in Thrace or that vicinity, that shall nationalize the religion of that empire, as under its last imperial head. The wild beast is the symbol of the civil rulers of the kingdoms of the western Roman empire, and the false prophet of the ecclesiastic and civil hierarchy of the papal states. The spirits work wonders, as the false prophet professes to work miracles. They are to be ecclesiastics, therefore, and to claim a divine sanction to their mission. They go to the kings of the whole world to gather them to the

battle of that great day of God Almighty. That great day is the day when the Son of God shall visibly descend and cast the wild beast and false prophet into the lake of fire, and destroy the kings and their armies. As the kings of the world are distinguished from the wild beast, which is the symbol of the civil rulers of the western Roman empire, they are the kings or chiefs of other nations and empires, in which there are worshippers of God, as of the north and east of Europe, Asia, Africa, America. The gathering of the antichristian powers to the battle of that day, is to be their last gathering to oppose the kingdom of the Redeemer.

As the spirits symbolize men and ecclesiastics, and go from the mouth of the three great antichristian powers, they denote men who are to be prompted by the principles and passions that distinguish those usurping and apostate combinations, are to be sent forth by them, and to go to excite in the rulers of the other kingdoms, the same hostility to the kingdom of Christ as reigns in the breast of the dragon, the wild beast, and the false prophet. They are to induce the kings of the whole world to unite in a war to prevent the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and to assemble them at the place which is in Hebrew called Armageddon; a name which, whether drawn, as some assume, from Meggedo, the plain at the foot of Carmel, on which Barak conquered Sisera and his army, or given to the scene from the victory which the Redeemer is there to gain over them, denotes the place of their destruction. As it is not to be supposed that they are to assemble with a purpose of contending directly with the Almighty Avenger at his advent, and there is no intimation that the true worshippers are to unite and attempt a defence of themselves by violence, nor is such a supposition compatible with the character of witnesses who assail their enemies only with the fire of their testimony, the aim probably of the kings is to be to refute the faith of believers in an indirect manner, as by the conquest of Jerusalem, or some other act, which shall be deemed to demonstrate that their expectation of the advent of Christ is ill-founded. As this conspiracy is immediately to precede his advent, it is to be subsequent to the drying of Euphrates, the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses, and the fall of great Babylon; and is to be at the period doubtless of that last persecution of the saints, which is to follow the final denunciation of vengeance on the worshippers of the wild beast and its image, chap. xiv. 9-14. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, that he may not walk

naked, and they may see his shame ; an intimation that the people of God will be expecting his advent, but the world at large taken by surprise ; and that all who are not watching and ready for the dread event, will be exposed by his appearing to public disgrace.

Mr. Cuninghame regards the three spirits as the spirit of atheism, despotism, and popery ; and Mr. Elliott as the spirit of infidelity, popery, and "ultra high churchism." But that is to exhibit them as characteristics of actors, not as agents, and is therefore against the law of symbolization. The spirits are bodied beings, like frogs ; and the symbols therefore of men, not of their principles or aims. Each of those writers assumes also that they are to employ themselves in the propagation of atheism, or infidelity, anarchy, and popery. The representation, however, of the prophecy is, that they go to the kings to gather them together to battle with the Son of God, and those who descend with him from heaven ; which implies that they are to unite in a formal endeavor to prevent the establishment of his throne on the earth, and perhaps by the occupation of Judea, or some other act, that shall be deemed to involve a refutation of the prophecy of his millennial reign.

SECTION XLVIII.

CHAPTER XVI. 17-21.

THE SEVENTH VIAL.

AND the seventh poured his vial into the air, and a great voice came from the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and there was a great earthquake. The like had not been since men were on the earth, such an earthquake, so great. And the great city went into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the vehemence of his indignation. And every island fled, and mountains were not found. And hail great in weight as talents descended from heaven on the men. And the men blasphemed God for the stroke of the hail, for its stroke was very great.

The other vials were poured on different parts of the symbolic world—the land, the sea, the rivers, the sun, the throne of the

wild beast, the Euphrates, and the effect of each limited to its peculiar scene. That this is to be poured into the air which envelops the globe, indicates that the great changes which follow it are not to be circumscribed within the western Roman empire, but to extend to all the kingdoms of the earth. Lightnings, voices, and thunders, are symbols of the vehement thoughts and passionate expressions of multitudes, occasioned by the sudden discovery of momentous truth. An earthquake denotes a civil revolution, in which the whole surface of society is thrown into commotion and disorder, and ancient political institutions shaken down. This convulsion, which is to transcend in violence all that had preceded it, is doubtless the same as that which is symbolized under the sixth seal, and is to extend to all the governments of the earth. Great Babylon, which had previously fallen, is then to separate into three parts. The apostate hierarchies are not only to survive their disjunction as establishments from the civil governments, but those governments themselves, and to divide into three parties—not geographically, which were not in accordance with analogy—but in respect to leaders, principle, or policy. The cities of the nations, in contradistinction from the great city, are the hierarchies of the nations without the ten kingdoms, as the Russian, the Greek, the Armenian, the Syrian. They also are then to fall. God is then to pour on great Babylon that storm of wrath by which she is to be utterly destroyed. Every smaller combination of men symbolized by the islands, is to be dissolved, and mighty governments, denoted by mountains, vanish from existence. A hail-storm is a symbol of sudden and resistless strokes, by which, in a violent political revolution, men are smitten down from dignity, independence, and happiness, to helplessness, vassalage, and ruin; as such a storm strips the leaves and fruits from the trees, and dashes down the crops of grass and grain. Such a devastating tempest is to beat on the men who belong to the train of antichrist, and they are to blaspheme God because of the greatness of their calamities. The revolutions and contests indicated by these symbols, are doubtless to follow the advent of the Son of God to raise the saints from death, to precede the vintage, and perhaps the harvest, and to occupy a considerable period.

SECTION XLIX.

CHAPTER XVII. 1-18.

THE WOMAN, THE GREAT BABYLON, THE TEN-HORNED WILD BEAST, AND THE KINGS.

AND one of the seven angels who held the seven vials, came and talked with me, saying, Come, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot, who sits on the many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they who dwell on the earth have been drunk with the wine of her fornication. And he led me in Spirit into a desert; and I saw a woman seated on a scarlet wild beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was robed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stone, and pearls; having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication, and on her forehead a name written;—Mystery, the great Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And I wondered, seeing her, with great wonder. And the angel said to me, Why dost thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the wild beast that bears her, which has the seven heads and ten horns. The wild beast which thou didst see, was, and is not, and is about to ascend from the abyss, and go to perdition. And they who dwell on the earth, whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, shall wonder, seeing the wild beast, that it was, and is not, and yet is. Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains where the woman sits on them, and are seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when it has come it must continue a short time. And the wild beast, which was and is not, is itself also an eighth, and is of the seven, and goes to perdition. And the ten horns which thou didst see are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but receive power as kings in one hour with the wild beast. They have one mind, and give their power and authority to the wild beast. They shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they who are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he said to me, The waters which thou didst see where the harlot sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

And the ten horns which thou didst see and the wild beast, they shall hate the harlot, and make her desolate, and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire: For God has put into their hearts to do his will, and to pursue one counsel, and to give their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman whom thou didst see, is the great city which has empire over the kings of the earth.

It is apparent from the representation, that the woman had already been beheld by the apostle sitting where there were seven mountains and many waters; that she was exhibited in that scene in a vision which is not recorded, and for the reason, doubtless, that her agency with the kings, who were exhibited in connection with her, was unsuitable for description. The scene was the site of Rome. The seven heights were the seven hills of that city, and they were symbols of the seven kinds of rulers who exercised the government of the ancient empire, as is shown by the angel's interpretation, who exhibits them as the same as the seven heads of the wild beast. The hills were surrounded by many waters, which are symbols of the peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues of the Roman empire, after the emergence of the ten kingdoms, as is shown by their cotemporaneousness with the woman, during the agency ascribed to her, which she exerted subsequently to the establishment of those kingdoms. The woman seated where the hills were and the waters, symbolized the great Babylon, the nationalized hierarchies of the apostate church, and actions are ascribed to her which render it apparent that the kings of the earth were also exhibited as uniting with her in her idolatry. The spectacle, therefore, like the wild beast on which she is now exhibited, represented the ancient rulers of the empire as well as its kings in its last form; and in addition, by the waters, symbolized their subjects in their relations to the harlot; and its object was to represent her in her union with the kings in promoting idolatry, and her agency in seducing the people to join in their worship. Her relation to the kings and people, and her character as an idolatress, having thus already been exhibited to the apostle, the angel now called him to another spectacle, in which she is represented in her relations to the rulers, first as her supporters, and finally as her destroyers. The wild beast, on which she is borne, was, and is not, and yet is. It was, as the successions of rulers of the ancient empire, which its heads symbolize, had been, but were not, at the period indicated by the vision, when the supreme authority had passed from the heads to the horns.

It is not, as a government of a head is no longer exercised over the empire as anterior to its fall; and yet it still is in an eighth form, inasmuch as the cotemporaneous kings who now reign over the kingdoms into which it is divided, exert a sway essentially the same; maintaining the laws of the ancient empire in a large degree; uniting in supporting the same religion, as that which the rulers denoted by the seventh head supported; and, like those rulers, usurping the prerogatives of God, nationalizing the church, and assuming to determine by their will the religious duties of their subjects. That it is in this relation that they are still the wild beast, is shown in the representation, that it is in their having one counsel that they give their power and authority to the wild beast. They become a combination of rulers, and render their several governments one, by exercising their power and authority on the same principles and for the same purposes, for which the supreme power was exercised by the seventh head; and in that respect they are an eighth, formed of the seven, and appropriately symbolized by the same monster under the horns, because of the similarity of their assumptions, religion, laws, and conduct towards God and his people.

It is covered with the names of blasphemy in symbolization of its arrogation of the rights of God, and assumption of authority over his legislation. It is not a blasphemer by its conquests, its blood-shedding, and tyranny. Names of blasphemy have no adaptation to symbolize such agencies, which have not God, but fellow-creatures, for their object. Its bloodiness and cruelty moreover are denoted by its form as a ferocious wild beast. But it blasphemes by setting itself in the place of God, arrogating his prerogatives, and exacting a homage that is due only to him. That it does in assuming the right to dictate the faith and worship of its subjects, legislating over the laws he imposes on them, making its will the reason that they are to offer a worship, treating dissent from its creed and a refusal to unite in the rites it enjoins, as a crime meriting the same punishment as revolt from God, exalting the authority of ecclesiastical teachers and rulers above that of the Almighty, and all other acts in which it asserts a dominion over men in their relations to the creator;—as in all those acts it treats their relations to him as subordinate to their relations to itself, and thence treats him also as subordinate in right and authority to itself; and accordingly in effect denies his deity, his title to the homage which he demands, and thence the rectitude of his law, and exhibits him as an usurper. Of these tremendous blasphemies the rulers of the

en kingdoms, as well as of the ancient empire, especially those denoted by the seventh head, have been notoriously guilty.

The abyss out of which the wild beast was about to ascend, was the sea of many waters by which the peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues of the empire, after the fall of the imperial rule, were symbolized. The seven heads, like the seven mountains in the vision of the woman and the waters, denoted seven kinds of supreme rulers of the empire, five of whom had already fallen, one then was, and the other had not yet come. The head which then was, was the pagan imperial; those which had fallen, the kingly, the consular, the dictatorial, the decemviral, the tribunitia.¹ That which had not yet come, and was to continue a short time, was the false Christian imperial, commencing with Constantine in the year 312, and falling at the subversion of the western empire in 476. The ten horns denoted the dynasties of kings who had not received a kingdom at the period of the vision, and were not to receive one until the emergence of the wild beast from the abyss of waters, after the overthrow of the imperial government, but were to receive it at that period, and to perpetuate the beast itself in an eighth form, by uniting with one counsel to exercise a rule like that of the head which preceded them. The wild beast is in this eighth form to go to perdition; for the kings are to make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb is to conquer them, because he is King of kings and Lord of lords, and they who are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. The question between them, therefore, is to be, as has already been shown, one of prerogatives and supremacy. The Lamb is to conquer and destroy his antagonists, because he is under no such subordination to them as they blasphemously assume, in their attempt to exalt their authority above his; but has an absolute and exclusive right of dominion over lords and kings as well as subjects. It is also a question between them who are the true worshippers; they who acknowledge and honor God as the only legitimate object of homage, and only rightful religious lawgiver; or they who worship the wild beast, by assenting to its blasphemous usurpations; and the Lamb is to conquer, because they who are with him have paid the homage that accords with his rights, and are the worshippers whom he calls, whom he chooses, and who by their fidelity give proof of their meetness for his acceptance.

The woman seated on the wild beast is the symbol of the

¹ Livii Hist. lib. vi. c. 1. Taciti Annal. lib. i. c. 1.

great Babylon, the mother of harlots, the great city which has empire over the kings of the earth.

That empire is necessarily of a different nature from that of the kings themselves over their kingdoms ; and is thence ecclesiastical, not civil ; and is exercised by ecclesiastical hierarchies, as they alone exert or claim an authoritative sway over those under their jurisdiction. The station of the woman on the wild beast denotes that the combination of hierarchies which she symbolizes, is supported by the rulers whom that monster represents, and exhibits those hierarchies therefore as nationalized and established by the civil rulers. There is no other agency of the wild beast towards the woman, which her being borne by it, can symbolize. It does not denote the worship by the kings of her idols. It has no adaptation to represent such an agency, and that idolatry is symbolized by their fornication with her. It does not denote a submission to her as of supreme civil authority over them. It has no adaptation to express that submission, and they are nowhere exhibited as yielding it to her. The sway she exerts over them she is represented as exerting as a harlot and false prophet by enticements and miracles, not as a monarch over subjects. The wild beast is exhibited as the supreme civil power. She accordingly works wonders before it as such, and causes the inhabitants of the earth to worship it. There is no relation to the wild beast therefore which her station can denote, but her relation as a combination of nationalized hierarchies ; invested with the exclusive authority which she arrogates to teach and worship, supplied with revenues, and armed with power to enforce her will on her vassals, and to persecute her opposers ; and it has an obvious adaptation to indicate that relation.

Her purple and scarlet, her gold and gems, denote her wealth, luxury, and pomp ; her name and cup, her idolatry and artful agency in seducing the nations to apostasy ; her intoxication with the blood of the saints, the infuriate joy she derives from the slaughter of the witnesses of Jesus.

When, however, she has nearly run her career, the kings are to hate her, to rob her of her wealth, divest her of her ornaments, make her naked, devour her flesh, and burn her with fire ; for God has put into their hearts to fulfil his will, and act the part which is ascribed to them as they are symbolized by the horns of the wild beast, until his words are accomplished. The conversion of the kings to hatred and disarray of the great idolatress, devouring her flesh and burning her with fire, has already in a degree taken place, in the disallowance and scorn of her

imperious claims in most of the European states, the confiscation of her property in France and slaughter of many of her priests, the robbery of the churches, monasteries, and ecclesiastics, of their wealth, wherever the French armies penetrated during the wars of the revolution, the conquest of the papal states, and dejection of the pope from his throne by Bonaparte, the secularization of many of the ecclesiastical territories in Germany, the dissolution of the religious houses and confiscation of ecclesiastical property in Spain and Portugal during the revolutions in those countries, the resumption by the civil rulers of Austria and other kingdoms of the nomination to bishoprics and other rights which had been conceded to her on the erection of the image in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and in the abrogation in Great Britain of the monopoly of civil offices by the members of the establishment; and these retributive judgments, are doubtless to be continued and carried to a greater severity.

Commentators have universally interpreted the expression, the seven heads are seven mountains, as denoting that the heads are symbols of mountains. But that is against analogy, living beings having no adaptation to symbolize inanimate objects; nor agents objects incapable of an agency. The meaning undoubtedly is, that the heads are like the mountains which had been exhibited to the prophet in a different vision, symbols of seven kinds of rulers; and the reason of the comparison is, that in another vision, which is not fully related, the mountains had been employed as symbols of the seven species of supreme rulers of the ancient empire, with the waters as symbols of the population, while the woman was exhibited as seated there in the presence of the kings, to represent her in the exertion of the agency by which she induced them to idolatry. How, if the heads are the symbols of the seven hills of Rome, is the representation to be explained that five are fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come; and when it is come, it must continue a short time? If the heads are symbols of the hills, the succession of the heads must denote a succession of the hills to one another, as much as of the kings.

Commentators have also generally interpreted the expression, the woman is the great city which has empire over the kings of the earth, as denoting that she is a symbol of Rome. But that is against analogy, as it is to make a living agent the representative of an inanimate object. To suppose her, on the other hand, to be a symbol of Rome as a community, is to suppose her to be a symbol of her as a civil community, which is not only without

any authority from the prophecy, but is irreconcilable with the representation in the next chapter, that the material city, which is used to symbolize the great ecclesiastical Babylon, is a city of commerce. As that symbol city, which represents the same ecclesiastical structure as the woman is employed to symbolize, is a city of commerce, and therefore a civil community, the city which they represent must be one of a different nature. The material city employed to represent the spiritual is ancient Babylon therefore indisputably, not Rome. That is apparent also from the name, which is used literally, not as a metaphor; and from the sixth vial, in which the Euphrates is used to represent the subjects of the spiritual Babylon, and Darius and Cyrus, the kings of the east, who dried up that river, to personate those who are to exert an analogous agency on the ecclesiastical Babylon, and by the alienation from her of her subjects prepare the way for her being overthrown.

SECTION L.

CHAPTER XVIII. 1-24.

THE FALL AND DESTRUCTION OF THE GREAT BABYLON.

AND after these I saw another angel descending from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lighted by his glory. And he cried with a strong voice saying, She has fallen, has fallen, great Babylon, and become a habitation of demons, and a station of every unclean spirit, and a station of every unclean and hated bird; because all the nations have drunk of the inflaming wine of her fornication; and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the strength of her luxury.

And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have accumulated to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Give to her as she also gave; and double to her double according to her works. Into the cup into which she has poured, pour to her double. As much as she has glorified herself and lived luxuriously, so much torment give her and sorrow. Because in her heart she says, I sit a queen, and am not a widow, and I cannot see sorrow; therefore in one day her plagues shall come, death and sorrow and famine, and she shall be burned

with fire ; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her. And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her, when standing afar for fear of her torment, they may see the smoke of her burning, shall lament and mourn for her saying, Alas, alas, the great city Babylon, the mighty city ; for in one hour has thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth weep and lament for her, because no one buys their merchandise any more ; merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stone, and pearl, and linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and every fragrant wood, and every ivory vessel, and every vessel of most precious wood, and of brass, and of iron, and of marble, and cinnamon and spice, and odors and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep, and of horses, and of chariots, and of bodies and souls of men. And the ripe fruits of thy soul's desire have gone from thee, and all thy dainty and splendid things have perished from thee, and thou shalt not find them any more. The merchants of those things who have grown rich by her, shall stand afar for fear of her torment, weeping and lamenting, saying, Alas, alas, the great city which was clothed in linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone, and pearls ; for in one hour so great riches are destroyed. And every pilot, and every one who sails by the place, and sailors, and whoever worked at the sea, stood at a distance and cried, looking at the smoke of her burning, saying, What was like that great city ? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, the great city by which all who have vessels in the sea were enriched by her wealth ; for in one hour is she destroyed.

Rejoice over her, O heavens, and the saints, and the apostles, and the prophets, because God has condemned your condemnation by her.

And a mighty angel took a stone, as a great millstone, and cast into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be cast down, and shall not be found any more. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and pipers, and trumpeters, shall not be heard any more in thee ; and no artist of any art shall be found any more in thee ; and the sound of a millstone shall not any more be heard in thee ; and the light of a lamp shall not shine any more in thee ; and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard any more in thee :—because thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; because by thy sorceries all nations were seduced. And in her the blood of prophets and of saints was found, and of all who had been slain on the earth.

The angel descending from heaven and proclaiming the fall of Babylon is doubtless, like other symbolic agents, the representative of a body of men. The effulgence which he flashes over

the earth, denotes the resistless light in which they are to unveil the apostate character of Babylon, and the dazzling splendor in which they are to set the rectitude and wisdom of God in her punishment. The vehemence with which he proclaims her fall indicates that they are to regard it as an event of the greatest significance. Her fall is to be her dejection from her station as nationalized by the civil governments, and is to be produced by violence, as a city is overthrown only by a violent cause, as an earthquake, and as the millstone was hurled by the angel with violence into the sea ; and it is to be the work of the multitude in place of the rulers, as is shown by the regrets of the kings and nobility at her destruction.

As ancient Babylon, after her overthrow, became the habitation of wild beasts, her desolate houses were filled with doleful creatures ; owls, and satyrs, and dragons, cried in her pleasant palaces ; so this analogous Babylon is to become the resort after her fall of the most vile and detestable beings. Those who thereafter unite themselves to her, are to be as much more depraved and savage than her former adherents, as dragons, owls, and satyrs, are more hideous and hateful than the cultivated population of a wealthy and powerful city. They are to throw off their disguises, and exhibit their hostility to God in all its impiousness. All these representations indicate that her denationalization is to be a most momentous change to her, to the people of God, and to the world.

Her overthrow, like that of ancient Babylon, is to be in consequence of her idolatry, because all nations have drunk of her wine, and the kings have united with her in the practice and propagation of idol-worship. This representation is in accordance with the different agency which she has exerted towards them. The multitude have been seduced to her false worship by her arts ; while the kings needed no such seduction, but have ever been as ready to usurp the rights of God and exalt their authority above his, as she. They have been prompted by the same principles and passions in their co-operation with her in the imposition on their subjects of her apostate doctrines and worship.

After this proclamation of her fall, the prophet, as in the vision of the fourteenth chapter, heard another voice, and doubtless as then, of another angel, summoning the people of God to come out of her, lest they partake of her sins, and receive of her plagues. This angel, like the former, is to be regarded as the symbol of a body of men, and his cry shows, that after her fall, some of the people of God are still to linger within her commu-

nion ; and that after they who proclaim her dejection have fulfilled their office, others are to arise and summon all true worshippers to withdraw from her, lest by continuing under her jurisdiction they sanction her sins, and expose themselves to her punishment.

The discrimination of the city from its inhabitants, verifies the interpretation I have given of it, as the hierarchies of the church in distinction from their members ; not the church at large as many regard it. What the walls and dwellings of a material city are to the people whom they protect and shelter, the hierarchy of a church is to the members who place themselves under its authority. Her punishment is to be a wholly different event from her fall, is speedily to follow that catastrophe, and is to be inflicted by the hand of men. Give to her as she gave. Double to her double, according to her treatment of others. Into the cup into which she poured, pour to her double. These retributions are to overtake her suddenly. In a day her plagues shall come, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be burned with fire.

The kings of the earth who had united with her in her idolatries, are to witness her punishment and lament it. They are not to be its authors therefore, nor are they to attempt to hinder it. They are to stand at a distance, and leave the executors of the divine wrath, who are doubtless to be the multitude, to fulfil their office without obstruction. The survivance of the kings, shows that her fall is to take place before the great battle in which they are to be destroyed. Her merchants who are the great ones of the earth, symbolize the nobles doubtless and dignitaries that held the patronage of her benefices. They also, and others who have grown rich by her luxury, are like the kings, to witness her overthrow, without attempting to intercept it ; and are to lament it, and they alone. Heaven, by which as it is distinguished from the redeemed, is doubtless meant the angelic hosts, is summoned to rejoice over her, and the saints, and the apostles, and the prophets, because God has by his judgments condemned her condemnation of them.

And her destruction is to be entire. As a millstone when thrown into the depths of the sea, sinks forever from the sight of men ; so she is to be swept from the earth and leave not a trace of her greatness or mischievous dominion ; and because she is a sorceress whose whole agency has been to seduce men from God ; and a murderess who has shed the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who have been slain in the empire for the word

of God during her sway : which is another mark that she symbolizes the nationalized hierarchies, as they have been the instigators of all the persecutions of the witnesses of God from the commencement of their testimony.

What a tremendous doom thus awaits those apostate powers ! What a demonstration it is to form that God rejects them ! What a refutation of their impious pretences that they are his ministers, that they are exclusively invested with authority to teach his will, and that they enjoy his sanction in their usurpations, their idolatries, their blasphemies, their persecution of his worshippers ! And what an illustrious vindication of the witnesses and martyrs who resisted alike their seduction, and their vengeance, and maintained allegiance to the King of kings !

Grotius, Dr. Hammond, Mr. Brightman, Mr. Daubuz, and Vitringa, regard the great Babylon as a literal city, and as Rome either ancient or modern. But that is to treat the prophecy not as symbolic, but in every thing except the name of the city, as literal ; and is therefore of all constructions the most certainly erroneous. It is no more indisputable that the woman and the wild beast are symbolic, than it is that the literal city of arts and commerce which is here used as a symbol, is representative of an analogous structure ; and if those writers felt justified in assuming that it denotes a literal city, they should for the same reasons have regarded the woman as symbolizing a literal sorceress, who induces the nations to drink of a golden cup of abominations held in her hand ; and the wild beast as denoting a literal seven-headed and ten-horned monster on which the sorceress is borne. But as the vision is symbolic ; as the symbol city is a literal city like Babylon, of palaces and dwellings, of merchants and artisans, of merchandise and luxury, having a sea and land, and sustaining relations to civil rulers ; it is thence as indisputably certain that the city she represents, is not a merchant city, but an analogous structure of human beings, sustaining a relation of authority and supremacy towards vast multitudes of fellow-beings, resembling that of a city of walls and edifices towards the population that is sheltered within it. It is an organized body of men, therefore, or an assemblage of organizations that exercise official influence and dominion over a community or communities. It is not a political body, inasmuch as it is distinguished from the kings and great men of the earth. It is therefore ecclesiastical, and is the organized body of the rulers and teachers of the nationalized church, not the whole body of the church itself ; no more than the walls and edifices of a city, are the population that inhabit it.

It is that vast hierarchy of rulers and teachers whose authority and sway overshadow the unofficial multitude of the church, as the walls and dwellings of a city invest and shelter the inhabitants that reside within it.

Mr. Brightman, Mr. Daubuz, Vitranga, and Mr. Lowman, exhibit the merchants as the great dignitaries of the apostate church, and the sailors and traffickers of the sea as the inferior ranks of prelates, priests, and monks ; which inasmuch as those ranks are a part of the hierarchies which the city symbolizes, is to make the merchant city, and its merchants and traffickers the same. But the merchants, sailors, traffickers, and artisans, are not of those who are represented by the city, but of wholly different orders who contribute to its support, minister to its luxury, and derive from it wealth. • They symbolize those therefore who have control of the benefices and revenues, and supply the sustenance and luxury of the hierarchies ; such as the nobles and officers of state who hold the right of patronage, and the vast train of officials who serve in the spiritual courts, manage the property of the church, and constitute the households of the great dignitaries.

SECTION LI.

CHAPTER XIX. 1-4.

THE HYMN OF THE HEAVENLY HOSTS ON THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON.

AFTER these, I heard as a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Halleluia ! The salvation, and the glory, and the power of our God ; for true and righteous [are] his judgments ; for he has judged the great harlot, which corrupted the earth with her fornication, and has vindicated the blood of his servants from her hand ! And again they said, Halleluia ! And her smoke ascends forever and ever. And the four-and-twenty elders, and the four living creatures fell and worshipped God who sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Halleluia !

The shout from heaven of praise to God and celebration of the truth and justice of his judgments in the destruction of the apostate hierarchies, was obviously from the angelic hosts, as the response from the elders and living creatures is symbolic of

an answering song from the redeemed ; and denote that they are not only to be spectators of her overthrow, but to discern its uprightness and wisdom ; and are fully therefore to know her character and agency, his dispensations towards her, and the influences that are to spring from her punishment. What a vastness of knowledge it implies ! What a sense of his rights ! What an acquaintance with the reasons for which he allows men to rebel, and displays his rights and justice in their punishment ! What a realization of the guilt of rebellion ; and what an assurance that that great measure of his administration is to subserve the well-being of his kingdom through eternal ages ! This hymn presents a further demonstration that she is not a material city, but the representative of apostate men. As a material city is not an agent, and not the subject of praise or blame, its destruction could form no such display of the righteousness of God, or vindication of those whose blood had been shed in it.

SECTION LII.

CHAPTER XIX. 5-10.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB.

AND a voice came from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye who fear him, small and great. And I heard as a voice of a great multitude, and as a voice of many waters, and as a voice of mighty thunders, saying, Halleluia, that the Lord God Almighty has reigned. Let us rejoice, and exult, and give glory to him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself. And it was given to her that she should be robed in fine linen, bright and pure ; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him ; and he said to me, See thou do it not. I am a fellow-servant of thee and of thy brethren, who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.

The voice from the throne summoning all the servants of God of every rank to praise him, indicates that a great epoch is then

to be reached in his government, and a manifestation made of the results of his mysterious dispensations, that shall vindicate their rectitude and wisdom. The halleluia of the multitude that the Lord the God Almighty has reigned, indicates that they are to see that the peculiar administration which he has exercised, is most skilfully adapted to the great ends of his empire, and worthy of his infinite attributes, and has prepared the way for the reign of grace that is to follow through everlasting years.

The summons to rejoice and give him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has prepared herself, denotes that the period of the resurrection and public adoption of the holy dead has arrived, that his previous administration has served to fit them for the new relations to which they are to be exalted, and that it is to be to them an epoch of peculiar joy and exultation. Her being arrayed in fine linen, bright and pure, signifies their public justification; her marriage, their exaltation to stations as heirs and joint-heirs forever in his kingdom, as is shown by the symbol. As a bride by her marriage is united to her husband through life, so the redeemed are by their marriage with the Lamb, to be exalted to that relation to him which they are forever thereafter to sustain. They are never to descend to a lower station; they are never to ascend to a higher; but are to reign with him as kings and priests forever and ever. Their marriage is therefore to involve their resurrection from death, and exaltation to the thrones on which they are to serve him through their endless existence.

They who are to be called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb, are different persons from the raised and glorified saints who are denoted by the bride, and are doubtless the unglorified saints on earth.

The response of the angel to the apostle when falling to worship him, is eminently beautiful, indicating a befitting sense of the sanctity of God's rights, and exalting the services of the witnesses of Jesus to an equality with his own. I am a servant of the same order as you and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; for you and they in proclaiming that testimony before the nations and kings of the earth, are to fulfil essentially the same office as I, guided by the revealing Spirit, have fulfilled in interpreting the prophecy to you.

SECTION LIII.

CHAPTER XIX. 11-21.

THE WORD OF GOD AND HIS ARMIES.

AND I saw heaven opened ; and behold a white horse, and he who sat on it is called faithful and true ; and in righteousness he judges and makes war. And his eyes [were] as a flame of fire, and on his head many diadems, having a name written which no one knew but he. And he was clothed in a garment dyed with blood. And his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And from his mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it he may smite the nations, and he shall rule them with an iron sceptre, and he shall tread the wine-press of the wine of the vehemence of the wrath of God Almighty. And he has on his garments, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

And I saw one angel stationed in the sun. And he cried with a loud voice saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come, gather ye together to the great supper of God, that ye may eat flesh of kings and flesh of commanders of thousands, and flesh of mighty men, and flesh of horses, and of them who sat on them, and flesh of all, both freemen and slaves, both small and great.

And I saw the wild beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war with him who sat on the horse and with his army. And the wild beast was taken, and the false prophet with it, who wrought wonders before it, with which he deceived those who received the mark of the wild beast, and those who worshipped its image. And they two were cast alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were slain with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

He who sat on the white horse, is shown by his characters and titles to be the Son of God. As his diadems are the badge of his office as the incarnate Word, that there is a name written on them which no one knows but he, indicates that the aims of his incarnation, exaltation, and reign over the universe through eternal years, wholly transcend the grasp of created intelligences, and are comprehensible only by Omniscience. That he is known by them, however, to be the incarnate Word, is shown by the name by which he is designated, The Word of God, the creator of all things, the revealer of the Deity to creatures, the Redeemer

of men. And on his robe and on his thigh are written the titles of the office which he descends to assume on earth, King of kings, and Lord of lords. He appears in his own person, because no created agent has any adequacy to represent him either in nature or office. The office of the horse is simply to symbolize his descent to the earth as a king, and like the splendor of his countenance, the effulgence of his diadems, his garments, and his armies, to show that his advent is to be visible, and with the power and pomp of a victorious and avenging monarch. He is faithful and true; he descends to judge and to execute judgment on the nations, and to reign over the earth.

The armies in heaven that follow him, are of the same corporeal nature as he, manifestly, from their being seated on horses, and are shown to be the raised and glorified saints, also, by their robes of fine white linen, in which the bride, by whom they were symbolized in a former vision, was given to be arrayed. They also appear in their own persons, because neither any other beings, nor any fictitious symbols, are suited to represent them; and their descent is likewise to be visible. The opening of the heavens to reveal them, denotes that their descent is to be from paradise, the world where the Redeemer now reigns, and the ransomed dwell; not merely from the higher regions or clouds of our atmosphere, like the rainbow-angel, the angel announcing the fall of Babylon, and others, who symbolize men who arise and exert important agencies on earth.

All these peculiar representations, render it indisputable that this coming is to be a personal and visible advent. There is no instance in the Apocalypse, or any of the other symbolic prophecies, in which the Son of God is exhibited as the symbol of a created being, or succession of creatures. There is no analogy between him and his subjects by which he could appropriately represent them. It were to contradict their relations to each other. It were to detract from his dignity and the sanctity of his rights. It were indeed, in this instance, to foreshadow an assumption of his office as King of kings and Lord of lords, and exercise of his incommunicable prerogatives by creatures, and to sanction, therefore, a usurpation of his throne, like that of which the wild beast and false prophet are guilty. This personage indisputably has the name and titles of the eternal Word, and descends to exercise his peculiar office in judging and taking vengeance on his enemies, and reigning over his saints, and, therefore, if he be a symbol of an order and succession of men on earth, it is an order and succession who assume his name and ti-

bles, arrogate his prerogatives, and attempt to exercise his peculiar office as God-man, the king of saints, and the destroyer of those who refuse submission to their reign ; and those are the assumptions and endeavors of the antichristian powers which he comes to destroy. There is no supposition, therefore, that so contradicts the whole prophecy, that so detracts from the dignity, the rights, and the wisdom of the Redeemer which he comes to assert and vindicate, and that is thence so certainly false, as that which exhibits him as here appearing as a representative of men. It is, in every relation, the grossest solecism, making the creator the symbol of creatures, the king the symbol of his subjects, the judge of those whom he judges, the infinitely upright of rebels, Christ of usurping antichrists.

The supposition that the coming symbolized by this descent, is not personal, but merely by acts of power, justice, or grace, or a manifestation of his presence by effects, as held by Dr. Whitby, Mr. Faber, Mr. Vint, Mr. Bush, Mr. Stuart, and many others, is equally untenable. As the agent himself is exhibited, and is wholly distinct from his agency, so indisputably he is symbolic, as well as the acts he exerts. His act also in descending is to be regarded as a symbol as much as his act in ruling and judging the nations, treading the wine-press, or any other which he is represented as exerting after he reaches the earth. It can no more be assumed that the agent is not to descend, than it can that he is not to reign, to judge, and inflict vengeance on his enemies. To hold that it can be otherwise, is to imply that a similar assumption is justifiable in respect to every other symbolic agent in the visions, and erase at a stroke every trace of significance from the prophecy. If the agent in this instance symbolize nothing, if there be nothing foreshown but an agency, it may and must, for whatever reasons authorize that assumption, be in like manner deemed that the other symbolic agents are of no significance, and that nothing is foreshadowed but mere acts. The dragon, the wild beasts, the great sorceress, the image, the woman clothed with the sun, the witnesses, the martyr souls, the angel ascending from the east, the rainbow-angel, are no longer on that assumption to be regarded as representative agents ; their natures, their titles and characteristics, convey no information in respect to any beings who were or are to appear and act on the earth. We have no longer the slightest indication that any of the agencies foreshown are to be exerted by men, but rather a presumption that they are to be the work of invisible beings. We have, consequently, no indication that any one of the agencies

symbolized in the visions has yet been exerted, inasmuch as we have no knowledge of any acts of invisible beings that are a fulfilment of the prophecy. The events which are alleged by interpreters as accomplishments of the predictions, are the actions of men, not of invisible agents. They were men who exercised the agency which is supposed to be foreshown by the horsemen of the first four seals, and the hail, the burning mountain, the wormwood meteor, the locusts and the horsemen of the trumpets. They were men, and men alone, to whom the acts are ascribed which are generally supposed to be symbolized by the seven-headed dragon, the ten-horned wild beast, the wild beast of two horns, and the sorceress. If the symbolic agents, therefore, are of no significance, if their exhibition in the visions presents no ground for the conclusion that they are to appear in the scene of the agency which they foreshow, if that agency may be the work of beings invisible and immeasurably distant, then no just ground remains for the assumption that any acts which men have exerted are fulfilments of the prophecy, and every interpretation hitherto advanced must be rejected as without any demonstrable or probable accuracy. Such is the refutation of their own systems of construction which their assumptions involve, who hold that there is nothing but a mere agency symbolized in the presence and agency of the Son of God in this vision.

In like manner if some of the actions which the symbolic agents are exhibited as exerting may be assumed to be of no significance, all certainty is destroyed that any of them are of a representative character. Whatever consideration can show that the act of the Word of God in descending from the opened heavens to the earth is of no symbolic meaning, will equally show that his smiting the nations, his ruling them with an iron sceptre, and his treading the wine-press, are without any prophetic import whatever, and divest at once all the agencies of the symbols, as well as the symbolic agents themselves, of a representative character. Such is the bottomless gulf of error and absurdity into which they precipitate themselves, who assume that the descent of the Word of God in this vision is no symbol of his personal advent.

That assumption is irreconcilable also with the representation that the armies in heaven follow him in his descent. What import can be attached to that act unless his descent is symbolic of a personal advent? If they are not personally and visibly to come when the great acts are to be exerted which the vision is designed to foreshow, there clearly is no agency of which they

are capable which it can be imagined to symbolize. They cannot be supposed to produce effects on earth while in a distant sphere, nor without a descent, to witness the agencies of other beings in our world.

As indeed there is no act ascribed to them in the vision except their following the Word of God, to assume that neither that act nor their presence has any significance, is to assume that there is no reason for their representation in the vision; and if that may be assumed in respect to them, it obviously may equally in respect to every other agent and agency, and the whole prophecy at once be totally divested of its meaning. There is no medium then between regarding the vision as symbolizing a personal advent of the Word of God and his army, and the rejection of the whole series of symbolic agents and agencies as without any significance.

And finally, that it is to be a personal and visible advent, is shown by the express representation in the introduction of the Apocalypse that he is to come with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him.

The sun undoubtedly, in this vision, as under the fourth trumpet and fourth vial, is a symbol of the rulers exercising chief authority in the ten kingdoms. The one angel accordingly stationed in it, and summoning the birds to assemble and eat the flesh of the antichristian host, is a symbol of at least some one conspicuous person, perhaps a class, that is to be in intimate communication with those rulers, but not of their number, and that is to warn them of their impending destruction. As the armies are to be literal armies, and the slaughter a literal slaughter, so the birds that fly in mid-heaven are to be literal birds, and carnivorous, of which it is characteristic that they soar at great heights, and discern their prey at a distance. To suppose the birds, the slaughter, and the carcasses, are not to be literal, is to suppose that the death which is symbolized is not to be the death of the body but of the spirit, which is to contradict the whole representation.

As the wild beast is the representative of all the civil rulers of every grade of the ten kingdoms, except those of the papal state denoted by the false prophet, the kings and their armies who are assembled with the wild beast, are to be regarded as the kings and armies of other antichristian kingdoms, as of the north and east of Europe without the limits of the western empire, and of Asia, Africa, and, perhaps, America. All the usurping

and persecuting enemies of Christ are to share in that catastrophe.

The dejection alive of the wild beast and false prophet into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone, implies that the bodies of those whom they symbolize are to be made immortal, like those who are to be consigned to that abyss after a resurrection from death to shame and everlasting contempt. The rest of the armies are to be slain by the sword—the symbol that a sentence of avenging justice is to be pronounced on them—which proceeds from the mouth of the Word of God, and the birds are to be filled with their flesh.

This great battle, in which all the civil, ecclesiastical, and military enemies of Christ, arrayed in organized and open hostility to him, are to be destroyed, is doubtless the same as that of Armageddon, to which the kings are to be gathered by the unclean spirits; and is a wholly different gathering from that denoted by the vintage and the parable of the goats, which is to take place subsequently, and embrace classes who sustain the relations of supporters and approvers to the wild beast and false prophet, like those of the merchants, the artisans, the sailors, and traffickers of the sea, to the great Babylon, and those symbolized by the goats who refuse all succor to the brethren of Christ when persecuted by the wild beast.

As the glorified saints are to attend the Redeemer at this advent, their resurrection, acceptance, and exaltation to stations as kings and priests in his kingdom, are to precede that great battle; and it is on that occasion, doubtless, that Christ's promise, chap. iii. 26, 27, is to be fulfilled, that he will give them power over the nations, and they shall rule them with an iron sceptre, as earthen vessels are broken.

SECTION LIV.

CHAPTER XX. 1-3.

THE BINDING OF SATAN.

AND I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. And he seized the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him a

thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut and set a seal on it, that he might not seduce the nations any more until the thousand years should be finished; and after them he must be loosed a short time.

The dragon is expressly defined to be the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, the great adversary of God and man, who has seduced the nations. He is the great fallen angel therefore, not the fictitious monster the seven-headed dragon, by which the rulers of the Roman empire anterior to its subversion are symbolized; and he is the representative of himself merely and his subordinate angels, not of pagan priests and rulers, as in the vision of the war in heaven with Michael and his angels. The characteristics ascribed to him, such as antiquity and the seduction of the nations of earlier ages, are not predicable of any who exist on the earth only during a short period. The only men who are represented in the prophecy as seducing the nations are those symbolized by the false prophet, who has already been exhibited as cast alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. No men of that class, therefore, can be supposed to be any longer on the earth. To regard him as the symbol of men on earth, is either to suppose the same individual men to continue to live shut up in an abyss through three hundred and sixty thousand years, to be released after that period, restored to the surface of the earth, and to resume their former agency, or else to suppose them to continue as a race by propagation in such an abyss through that period; each of which is wholly incompatible with our nature. Neither a race nor individuals dependent for life on air, light, warmth, and perpetual sustenance by vegetables and animals that exist only in an atmosphere illuminated by a sun, can subsist in a bottomless deep from which those requisites to life are wholly excluded. He is the representative, therefore, not of men, but of himself only and his associate fallen angels. He is exhibited in his own person because no other being, real or imaginary, could serve as his representative.

It may be thought inadmissible thus to assume that the pit and the imprisonment, are symbols of a real abyss or deep, and a real imprisonment in it of the symbolized agents. But the design of the spectacle, it should be considered, is not to foreshow a punishment of those agents for a previous agency, but merely their interception from influence on the nations during the thousand years. The abyss must be taken, therefore, as denoting a real place, such as a deep cavern of the earth may properly symbolize; and the dejection of Satan bound into it and confine-

ment there, his banishment from the presence of the nations to whom his removal is a relief and deliverance, and restraint from access to them during the period represented by the thousand years. Otherwise there is no analogy between the symbols and that which they are employed to denote:

The angel with the key and chain, is as obviously a symbol of unfallen angels, not of men. The agency ascribed to him is such as none but angelic beings are competent to exert. The angel who bound and imprisoned the devil, is distinguished both from the nations who are freed from his presence and influence during his imprisonment, and from those who are seduced by him after his release. He cannot be a symbol of those nations therefore, nor a part of them. He is a representative of angels then, not of men; and they are symbolized by one of their own species, because no being of another order is adequate to represent them.

The period of the imprisonment is symbolic, as well as the agents, the key and the chain, the abyss and the seal; and representing, like other symbolic periods, a year for each day, denotes three hundred and sixty thousand years. It can no more be assumed that this part of the representation is not symbolic, than that any other part is not. The period of a symbolic act must necessarily be symbolic, as well as the agent, the object, the instrument, the scene, and the action itself. Whatever reason can justify the assumption that any one of them is not a symbol, will equally justify the denial of that character to every other.

This great spectacle then foreshows, that the devil and his legions are to be seized by the holy angels, and imprisoned in the abyss three hundred and sixty thousand years; and are afterwards to be released for a short time. That imprisonment is to take place after the advent of the Redeemer, the resurrection of the holy dead, and the destruction of the wild beast and false prophet; as is shown by the representation that the risen saints are to reign with Christ on the earth during the thousand symbolic years, that the release of Satan from the abyss is to take place after that period has expired, and that he is then to be precipitated into the lake of fire and brimstone, into which the wild beast and false prophet were cast. Vitringa supposes the angel with the key and chain, a symbol either of divine providence or of Christ; Mr. Bush, of the power of the gospel. But neither is consistent with analogy, a living symbol never representing a mere power, agency, or event, nor a creature the creator.

Some interpreters, as Mr. Vint, exhibit this dragon as the same as the brute serpent of chapter xii. 3. But that was merely a fictitious dragon, employed to symbolize by its seven heads, the seven orders of the supreme rulers of the ancient Roman empire. This is expressly declared to be the devil, not a fictitious, but a real being. The persons symbolized by that dragon were not bound, but the last of the train dethroned and superseded in the western empire by other orders, represented by the ten-horned wild beast from the sea. Others who regard Satan as the agent that is bound, interpret the binding as denoting only a diminution of his influence, not its absolute interception by his imprisonment. But that is not in accordance with the symbol. There is no analogy between his being bound with a chain, hurled down into a bottomless abyss, and shut in, so that he can no longer exert a tempting influence on the nations; and his being left unfettered, unimprisoned, and only very partially withheld from exerting such an agency. Those authors refer his binding to past ages,—Archbishop Usher dating it from the birth or ascension of Christ; Grotius, Dr. Hammond, and Cocceius, from the reign of Constantine. But there are no indications that Satan was wholly intercepted from exerting a tempting influence on the nations during either of those periods. So far from it, they are the periods exhibited in the prophecy as marked by the greatest depression of the true worshippers, the usurpation of the throne and prerogatives of God, by ecclesiastical and civil rulers, the flight of the woman into the desert, the apostasy of the nationalized church to idolatry, and the persecution of the saints.

Mr. Vint and Mr. Bush, regarding the devil as the symbol of paganism, exhibit the abyss into which he was banished, as denoting the regions of idolatry exterior to Christendom. But as the first is against analogy, a living being having no adaptation to represent a mere system of opinions or agency, so the latter is inconsistent with the mode in which paganism was suppressed in the Roman empire. It was not by a migration of pagan priests and worshippers from the empire into southern Africa, eastern and northern Asia, or the north of Europe, that paganism disappeared from the Roman world; but first by the conversion of vast multitudes to faith in Christianity, and at length by the legal prohibition of idolatrous rites. Mr. Bush refers his binding to the age of Theodosius; Mr. Vint, to that of Charlemagne;—but as the event of which they interpret it, is not that which it denotes, no reason is left for assigning it to those periods.

All those authors assume likewise that the thousand years are not symbolic, but denote only the period which they literally express. But that, as has already been shown, is to disregard the law of symbolization. It can no more be assumed that the period of the imprisonment is not symbolic, than that the imprisonment itself is not, or the abyss.

SECTION LV.

CHAPTER XX. 4-6.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

AND I saw thrones ;—and they sat on them ; and judgment was given to them ;—and the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and whoever had not worshipped the wild beast, nor its image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand. And they lived and reigned with Christ the thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not, until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over them the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

The order in which the objects of this great spectacle are enumerated, is doubtless that in which they were presented to the apostle. He first beheld thrones, and a multitude, probably, as the martyrs, the witnesses of Jesus, and the saints of all ages are innumerable. Next august forms approached and sat on the thrones, and a sentence was pronounced on them, probably adjudging them to the station of kings and priests in Christ's kingdom on the earth. Then he distinguished among them, first the martyrs who had been slain for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God ; and next those who had not worshipped the wild beast, nor its image, nor received its mark on their forehead, or their hand ; and finally learned that the spectacle was a symbol of the first resurrection, that they who were then to be raised were to reign with Christ the thousand years, that they were to be forever freed from liability to the second death, and that the rest of the dead were not to live till the thousand years should be finished.

As thrones are the stations on which kings exercise their office as judges and executors of law, their elevation to thrones indicates their appointment to office as kings. As their authority is not to be founded in any degree on the will of those over whom they are to reign, but is to be the sovereign gift of Christ, it obviously is to be exercised wholly in subordination to him. They are to reign with him and under him as King of kings and Lord of lords, communicating his will to his subjects, vindicating his rights, and unfolding his great designs. They are to be priests of God and of Christ, acting in that relation as representatives of those over whom they reign, and presenting in his presence symbols of homage in their behalf.

The souls of the martyrs and others were their souls by symbolization, not their souls literally, inasmuch as many of them were not then in existence. They were exhibited in their own persons, not by a symbol of a different species, because no symbol of a different species could adequately represent them. No other beings are, or are to be subjects of such a change of nature, or to sustain such relations to Christ, as are the saints who are to be raised from death in glory and exalted to thrones in his kingdom. They are exhibited as souls, not as glorified saints, because they only are to be subjects of the first resurrection; though saints who are to live at that epoch, are to be raised by transfiguration to a similar glory. That none but they who are to be raised are represented in this spectacle, may be regarded as indicating that the transfiguration of the living saints, is not to take place till a later period.

The specific enumeration of martyrs, and whoever had not worshipped the wild beast nor its image, nor received its mark, does not imply that the whole were of those classes. They were doubtless but a part of the vast crowd. They who sat on the thrones and received judicial authority, symbolized the whole body of the saints who had died of all former ages; inasmuch as all are at that period to receive their reward; as we are shown by the chant of the heavenly hosts on the sounding of the seventh trumpet;—the time of the dead has come, to judge and to give the reward to thy servants the prophets, and the saints, and those who fear thy name, both the small and the great. The martyrs, and whoever had not worshipped the wild beast nor its image, nor received its mark, are enumerated probably because of their peculiar conspicuity and honors.

They symbolize themselves manifestly, not men in the body, inasmuch as none but the dead are capable of a resurrection; and

none but the disembodied saints of all ages whom they represent, exist to be raised to glory. It is not in violation of analogy, but in accordance with it, that they symbolize themselves, inasmuch as no symbol of a different species would truly represent them. To ascribe a resurrection to an angel, or to a living man, were to exhibit him as the subject of an event of which he is not in that condition of existence capable, and were to violate therefore instead of adhering to analogy.

It is a literal resurrection that is predicated of them manifestly, inasmuch as that is the only resurrection of which disembodied saints are capable. It certainly is not a renovation of heart, as they were renewed while in this life, and are made priests of God and of Christ, and given to reign with him, because they were saints here. As their resurrection then cannot be a spiritual change analogous to a restoration of the body from death, it must necessarily be a corporeal change. That it is to be a corporeal resurrection, is shown moreover by the representation that the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years should be finished. The rest of the dead are the literally dead, not the literally living, though without spiritual life. To treat that term like Mr. Faber, as a mere metaphor, is to deny to the vision the character of a symbol, and empty the whole passage of its meaning. If the death of those who are not partakers of the first resurrection, be but metaphorical, then must the death of the martyrs be metaphorical also, and thence the resurrection which is ascribed to the souls be merely metaphorical. But that is to make the passage a mere assemblage of metaphors, without any thing literal from which the figures are drawn, or to which they are applied; and to divest it of all propriety and significance. For if the souls of the dead, as well as the resurrection, be mere metaphors, no agents whatever are left to be their subjects. They are predicates without any thing of which they are affirmed; metaphors with nothing which they metaphorsize. But metaphors are never used as symbols, nor are symbols ever used to fulfil the office of mere metaphors. As the souls exhibited in the vision then are real souls, so also for the same reason, the rest of the dead are the real souls of the rest of the real dead; and the resurrection affirmed of the one, and denied of the other, a real resurrection, as there is no resurrection but that of the body of which the unholy dead are to be the subjects, any more than the holy. None are to be renewed to spiritual life after having closed their probation here. Nothing is more certain therefore, than that the symbolic souls of this vision, represent the real

souls of the martyrs and other saints, that the resurrection affirmed of them is to be a real resurrection from death, and that the honors and authority to which they are to be exalted, are those of priests and kings unto God, and a reign with Christ during the period denoted by the thousand years.

The first resurrection then is to be the resurrection of the saints in distinction from the unholy dead, is to include all who have died in faith of all former ages, and is to take place at the advent of Christ at the commencement of the thousand years. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so those also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first."¹ The thanksgiving of the elders at the sound of the seventh trumpet, represents also that all the servants of God are then to be raised and receive their reward. And that all who share in the first resurrection, are to reign also with Christ, is shown by the assurance that they are blessed and holy, that over them the second death has no power, and that they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him the thousand years. That the second death has no power over them, denotes that they are released by forgiveness from the penalty of sin, and adopted as heirs and joint-heirs with Christ.

The thousand years, are those during which Satan is to be bound, and denote a period of three hundred and sixty thousand.

This great spectacle thus foreshows that all the holy dead are to be raised in glory anterior to the millennial reign of Christ, publicly adjudged to thrones in his kingdom during the thousand years, and to reign with him as kings and as priests through the vast succession of ages symbolized by that period.

Vitringa interprets the resurrection and exaltation to thrones of the martyrs and others exhibited in this vision, as denoting, not that they are to be literally raised from the dead and invested with authority, but simply that they are to be vindicated in the judgment of men from the injurious imputations under which they were condemned. But that is not in accordance with the law of symbolization. There is no adaptation in the resurrection of the saints from death, and exaltation to thrones in Christ's kingdom, to represent a change in the opinions of men respecting

¹ 1 Corinth. xv. 22, 23; 1 Thessalon. iv. 14, 16.

them. The saints are not the subjects of that change, but the men who adopt the new opinion. Nor is there any analogy between the events. The one is a change of nature, the other of mere agency.

Dr. Whitby's and Mr. Faber's interpretation, who regard the resurrection of the saints as merely representing an adoption and exhibition by others of their principles and spirit, is in like manner wholly in violation of the law of symbols, as it makes bodies representatives of principles and dispositions, living agents of species of thought and affection, between which there is no analogy. If, on the other hand, it be held that the souls in this vision symbolize, not mere principles, or dispositions, but men of similar principles and spirit, who are to arise and live on the earth through the period denoted by the thousand years, then, inasmuch as the characteristics of the symbols are indicative of the characteristics of those whom they represent, it must also be assumed that they are to live and exhibit their principles in similar or analogous circumstances, and experience a similar treatment from their cotemporaries. Otherwise martyrdom and a refusal to worship the wild beast and the image, cannot become their characteristics. Those, therefore, who were beheaded, must on that assumption foreshow, that those whom they represent are also to be martyred, as much as that they are to have the spirit of martyrs: those who had not worshipped the wild beast nor its image, must foreshow that those whom they represent are to display a similar fidelity to God by refusing submission to the assumption of his rights by usurping civil rulers and apostate ecclesiastics; whilst those who were of the ages before the flood, of the patriarchs, and of the Mosaic dispensation, must denote that those whom they symbolize are to live under similar laws, in the same or analogous conditions, and exert a similar obedience through the period denoted by the thousand years. But that is not only in contradiction to the prophecy, but is impossible. Men are not again to live under the antediluvian, patriarchal, or Mosaic law.

Mr. Vint and Mr. Bush regarding this thousand years as coincident with that to which they refer the restraint of Satan, exhibit the thrones as the thrones of the European kingdoms; those who sat on them as their monarchs; and the souls of martyrs and others, as denoting men on earth, who during that period, fulfilled the office of witnesses and suffered martyrdom for the word of God. But that construction is in several relations inconsistent with the law of symbolization. It is founded on the assumption that Sa-

tan, an intelligent agent, is the symbol of paganism, a mere system of doctrines and agencies, between which there is no analogy. It is equally against analogy, to interpret disembodied souls as symbols of men on earth. The mode of existence, the scene, the relations to God and to fellow men, and the law of duty, are wholly dissimilar. It is against analogy also, to interpret their being disembodied, as denoting that those whom they represent were to be disembodied by martyrdom; actions alone being symbols of actions, and events of events. Mere agents are never representatives of actions, sufferings, or changes in the mode of existence. There is no suitability in the one to indicate the other. The souls are, moreover, expressly represented as the souls of those who had already been beheaded, not of those who were to suffer martyrdom during the thousand years. In like manner, those who were not worshippers of the wild beast, were such as had not in a previous existence worshipped it, not such as in a future existence were to refuse submission to that antichristian power. The only agency affirmed of them during the thousand years, is, that they reigned with Christ during that period. That the thousand years are not cotemporaneous with the reign of the wild beast and included in that period, is indisputable from the excess of the former over the latter. The triumph of the wild beast is limited to twelve hundred and sixty years, but the reign of Christ and the saints is to extend through three hundred and sixty thousand.

SECTION LVI.

CHAPTER XX. 7-10.

THE RELEASE OF SATAN.

AND when the thousand years should be finished, Satan shall be loosed from his prison, and shall go forth to seduce the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them to battle, the number of whom [is] as the sand of the sea. And they went up on to the breadth of the earth, and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire descended from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil who seduces them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also the wild beast and false prophet [had been cast,] and they shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever.

Satan is here doubtless, as in the vision of his binding, a symbol of the whole body of the fallen angels, and his emergence from prison, of their release universally and return to the seduction of men on earth. Gog and Magog are regarded by interpreters generally as the nations of northern Asia, and are expressly represented by Ezekiel, chapter xxxix. 2, as to come from the north. The beloved city is the new Jerusalem, which is the symbol, as will be shown in the exposition of the next chapter, of the glorified saints in their relations to unglorified men, of priests and kings, as great Babylon is the symbol of the priests and rulers of the apostate hierarchies. The camp of the saints, probably denotes the subordinate unglorified rulers of the obedient nations. Satan's enticing Gog and Magog to gather together to battle, denotes accordingly his enticing them to resist and endeavor to subvert the rule both of the glorified and the unglorified saints, and to elevate themselves into their place. That it is by his influence that they are to be excited to war, indicates that they had before been universally obedient. That they ascended on to the breadth of the earth, denotes that they advanced from the north towards the equator, and indicates that the visionary earth exhibited to the apostle, corresponded to the real one as a globe. That is implied also in the next vision, in which he beheld the motions of the earth and the planets, as well as their forms. The descent of fire from heaven on the revolvers, denotes that they are to be destroyed like the wild beast and false prophet, not by ordinary instruments, but immediately by the hand of the almighty Redeemer; and the dejection of Satan into the lake of fire to be forever tormented, that he and his legions are thereafter to be precluded from the earth and all other obedient orbs, and consigned to the chains and darkness of the abyss.

This prophecy, then, foreshows that after the risen saints have reigned with Christ the three hundred and sixty thousand years, Satan and his legions are to be allowed again to return to the earth and tempt men; that seduced by them, remote nations are to revolt from the sway of the saints which Christ has established over them, and attempt to exalt themselves to supreme authority; and that they are to be destroyed by a direct interposition of the eternal Word, and the tempting angels thereafter consigned to perpetual imprisonment in hell.

This release of Satan is referred by Grotius, and those who follow him, in the exposition of other parts of the prophecy, to the fourteenth century, when the Ottoman Turks, whom he regarded as symbolized by Gog and Magog, invaded the eastern

and western empire. But the wild beast had not emerged from the sea, nor the false prophet from the land, at the elevation of Constantine, from which he dates the thousand years: Satan was not then bound, nor did three hundred and sixty thousand years intervene between the fourth and the fourteenth centuries.

SECTION LVII.

CHAPTER XX. 11-15.

THE RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT OF THE UNHOLY DEAD.

*AND I saw a great white throne, and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before the throne, and books were opened, and another book was opened, which is of life. And the dead were judged from the things written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it; and death and the grave gave up the dead who were in them. And every one was judged according to their works. And death and the grave were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And as any one was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

The flight of the earth from the presence of the Judge, indicates that the scene of the judgment was at a distance from its orbit. In the other visions in which it had been exhibited, it appears to have been represented as stationary, and necessarily, in order that the symbolic agents might exert their agency in the apostle's sight. But as the subjects of this vision were on their resurrection withdrawn from the earth, no such reason remained for its continued presence, and its flight accordingly, and that of the planets, was that doubtless of their real motion around their orbits. That no place was found for them, denotes simply therefore that they continued in motion.

The dead, small and great, who stood before the throne, had been raised from death, manifestly from the sea's giving up the dead that were in it, and death and the grave the dead that were in them; as they are the bodies of the dead only, not their souls which descend into the sea and the grave, or remain unburied in the realms of death.

The books are symbols of the perfect knowledge of the Al-

mighty of all the actions of those who are judged, and their being opened denotes his manifestation to them of that knowledge, and demonstration to their consciousness that his judgment of them is according to their works.

Death is exhibited, not as an agent, but as the place of the unburied dead; obviously from the representation that the dead were in it. It gave up the dead that were in it, as the sea and the grave gave up the dead that were in them; and as they contain all the buried dead, those who were not in their domains, but the realms of death, must be the unburied dead. If death were exhibited, not as a realm, but as an agent, no reason could exist for representing the dead in the sea and the grave as not under its dominion, as much as the unburied. All would indisputably be equally its captives. Death, moreover, cannot be a living agent, like the form on the pale horse under the fourth seal, inasmuch as it would then necessarily, by the law of symbols, represent living agents who had been causes to men of spiritual death, and its giving them up would indicate their restoration to spiritual life. But no such agents can be supposed to have any bodies of the dead under their dominion in any such manner as the grave contains those which are buried in it; nor are those who are given up restored to spiritual life. There are no such agents besides Satan and his legions, and the impenitent dead themselves, neither of whom can be supposed to be symbolized in that relation in this vision. The fallen angels had already been consigned to the abyss of punishment; and the apostate teachers who are symbolized by the shape on the pale horse, and all others who go to the grave anterior to the advent of Christ, are to be among the dead who are to stand before the throne, and cannot therefore be supposed to be represented again by a separate symbol. And finally, this construction is confirmed by the symbolization of the second death by a place, not by an agent. This is the second death, the lake of fire. The lake of fire is everywhere exhibited as the symbol of the place to which fallen angels and impenitent men are everlastingly consigned, and their dejection into that lake, their precipitation to that place. The dejection of death and the grave into that lake, denotes that no place of the dead is any more to exist on earth.

All the impenitent dead of all ages are to be the subjects of this resurrection and judgment. Whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. And they only are to be its subjects, manifestly from the representation in the vision of the souls of the saints, that all the holy who die an-

terior to the millennium, are to be raised at its commencement, and reign with Christ throughout that period; and the representation in the next vision, that none are during that period to suffer the infliction of death. That none but such as are written in the book of life are saved, indicates that none turn from revolt and embrace the redemption through Christ, but those who were chosen by him to salvation from before the foundation of the world, and are converted and upheld in obedience by his sovereign grace.

Mr. Bush interprets this spectacle, not as a representation of a real corporeal resurrection, and public and general judgment of the impenitent dead, but as a mere figurative indication that each individual is judged on his entering the invisible world. But that is wholly to deny it its proper character as a symbol, and thence to divest it of all its peculiar meaning. If, as he assumes, the throne is a mere figure, and the being who sat on it, then for the same reason must they also who stood before him, and his act of judging them, be mere figures. But that is to convert the whole scene into an unmeaning shadow. There is neither a judge, subjects of judgment, nor a judicial act; for if the agent be discarded, no action can remain; and if neither judge, nor judicial sentence, no subjects on whom a sentence is pronounced. But if we may assume that this vision has no symbolic meaning, if it forms no representation that Christ is visibly to manifest himself enthroned as the judge of men, that all who remain dead at the end of the thousand years, and die during the revolt which Satan is subsequently to excite, are then to be raised, visibly assembled before him, and receive a public judgment according to their deeds, why may we not equally assume that none of the other agents or agencies exhibited in the visions have a symbolic character? What proof is there that the wild beast and false prophet are representatives of real agents that were to appear on the earth, and exert an agency analogous to that which is ascribed to those symbols? What proofs that the symbols of the seals, the trumpets, and the vials, are representative of real agents and agencies? There is clearly no medium between admitting the law that each symbolic agent is representative of a real agent, and each act of a symbolic agent representative of a real act, and the rejection of the book as without any intelligible significance.

SECTION LVIII.

CHAPTER XXI. 1-8.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH.

AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and the sea is no more. And the holy city, new Jerusalem, I saw descending out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God with men! and he shall dwell in a tent with them; and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, their God; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more; nor shall sorrow, nor crying, nor toil be any more; for the former things have passed away. And he who sat on the throne, said, Behold I make all things new. And he said, Write that these words are faithful and true. And he said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to him that thirsts of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit these things; and I will be God to him, and he shall be a son to me. But to the cowardly, and faithless, and defiled, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all the false, their part [is] in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

The heaven, earth, and sea, are undoubtedly here, as under the trumpets and vials, symbolic. The new heaven represents rulers of a new order; the new earth, subjects of a new character; and the disappearance of the sea, that the nations are no more to be excited to violent agitations by the storms of revolt, revolution, and war.

The new Jerusalem is the symbol of the raised and glorified saints, in their relations to men as kings and priests who are to reign with Christ. It does not denote a literal city manifestly, as that were to make the symbol and that which it represents, of the same species; but is an organization of rulers extending a beneficent authority and influence over those whom they govern, analogous to the shelter of a city to those who dwell beneath its roofs; and must therefore denote the risen saints as kings and priests, as they alone are to descend from heaven to earth, and exercise a sway over men. It is accordingly ex-

pressly denominated in a subsequent vision, the bride the Lamb's wife, by whom in a former vision the risen and glorified saints are symbolized; and is shown to be their representative by the inscription of the names of the twelve apostles on its foundations. In accordance with this, it is said by the living creatures and elders, who are the symbols of the redeemed of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, during their intermediate state, that they are kings to God and priests, and shall reign on the earth; is promised by the Redeemer to whoever is victorious, that he will write on him the name of the city of God, the new Jerusalem which descends out of heaven, which denotes, doubtless, that he shall be one of the polity which that city represents; and the saints are exhibited in the vision of the first resurrection, as raised from death, exalted to thrones, and reigning with Christ during the thousand years. It is thus shown, on the one hand, that the glorified saints are to descend and reign with Christ on the earth, and that this city symbolizes them; while on the other, no intimation is given of such a descent to our world of any other order of beings. It is indisputably therefore the representative of the redeemed who are to reign as kings and priests with Christ, in like manner as great Babylon, the antagonist city, is a symbol of the apostate rulers of the church who usurp his throne on earth. Accordingly, as the risen saints are denominated the Lamb's wife, and are said to have prepared themselves, so this city is said to be prepared as a bride for her husband.

It is denominated the tabernacle of God with men, and is promised that he will dwell in a tent with them, and that they shall be his people, and that he himself will be with them, their God; which denotes both that the glorified saints are to be visible to men, as a tent is visible to those in whose presence it is stationed, and that God is to be visibly present with the glorified saints; as his presence in the ancient temple was manifested when it was filled with the smoke and flame of his glory. Men universally are to be sanctified, to own and honor him as God, and to enjoy manifestations of his presence and favor. He is to wipe every tear from their eyes. They are no more to be subjected to death, nor know any thing of sorrow, mourning, or toil. All the forms of penal evil, brought on the race by the fall, are to cease, and all things become new. It is he who is a victor that is to share in the bliss and glory of this reign with Christ. The unholy of all classes are to be excluded from it, and consigned to the abyss of misery.

How unlike his former dispensations towards men, is the sway of Christ to be during this period! How changed their condition, freed from the wants, the necessities of toil, and the inquietudes and sorrows to which they were subjected by the revolt of the first pair! How intimate the relation to him to which they are to be restored, and the intercourse they are to enjoy with the glorified saints who attend in his presence! How vast the demonstration which is thus to be made of the adaptation of their nature to his service, notwithstanding the fall; and of the lofty degrees of wisdom, rectitude, and blessedness, of which they are capable! And how suited that demonstration to vindicate his sway over them in preceding ages, and refute the accusations and misapprehensions of his government, of which men have been guilty!

The descent of the city is to take place at the commencement of the millennium, manifestly from the representation that the marriage of the Lamb was come, and that his wife had prepared herself, immediately after the destruction of great Babylon, chapter xix. 7, 8; from the exhibition of the risen and glorified saints as seated on thrones and reigning with Christ during the thousand years; and from the representation of the beloved city as on earth at the revolt of Gog and Magog, after the close of the thousand years.

That there is to be no death, sorrow, mourning, nor toil, during that period, is consistent with the destruction of Gog and Magog, inasmuch as their revolt is to take place after the millennium is closed.

SECTION LIX.

CHAPTER XXI. 9-27. XXII. 1-5.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

AND one of the seven angels who held the seven vials, which were filled with the last seven plagues, came and talked with me, saying, Come, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me in Spirit on to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Its splendor was like a most precious stone, as a crystal jasper; having a great and high wall, having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed

which are of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel: on the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates; and the wall of the city having twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who talked with me held a measure, a golden rod, that he might measure the city, and its gates, and its wall. And the city lies a quadrangle, and its length is the same as its breadth. And he measured the city with the rod, to twelve thousand furlongs. The length of it is equal, and the breadth, and the height. And he measured the wall of the city, a hundred forty-four cubits man's measure, which is the angel's. And the superstructure of its wall was jasper, and the city pure gold, like pure crystal. And the foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone. The first foundation, jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoptase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates, [were,] twelve pearls. Each gate was of one pearl; and the broad place of the city was pure gold, as translucent crystal.

And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb. And the city has no need of the sun, nor the moon, that they may enlighten it, for the glory of God enlightens it, and its lamp [is] the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. And its gates shall not be shut by day, for there is no night there. And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. And nothing shall enter it that is unclean, and that works defilement and falsehood, but they only who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

And he showed me a river of water of life, pure as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the broad place, and on each side of the river, [was] the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, according to each month yielding its fruit, and the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more. And the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it. And his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face, and his name [shall be] on their foreheads. And there shall be no night any more, and they shall have no need of light of lamp, or light of sun, for the Lord God shall shine on them, and they shall reign forever and ever.

As the city is the symbol of the Lamb's wife, the raised and glorified saints adopted as joint-heirs with Christ, exalted to thrones and associated with him in his reign on earth, its descent to the earth symbolizes their descent from heaven after their justification and investiture as kings and priests in his empire. The

splendor of the elements of which it is built, denotes the beauty of their persons and the perfection of their character ; its magnitude immensely transcending the vastest extent over which the unaided eye can discern the most brilliant objects on the surface of the earth, the incomprehensible greatness of their multitude ; and the regularity of its form, the harmony of its parts, and its massiveness and strength, the symmetry of their relations to each other, the unity of their spirit, and the energy of their sway. That the length of the city is equal, and its breadth and its height, denotes not that its length, breadth, and height are the same, but simply that its length is the same at all points, its breadth the same at all points, and its height at all points the same.

The gates symbolize the access to the glorified which the nations are to enjoy. That they are distributed equally to the several sides, indicates that they are to be accessible alike to the nations wherever they may reside ; that there is to be no night there, that they are never to be without the visible presence of God ; that its gates are never shut, that the nations are to enjoy uninterrupted access to the glorified ; and that an angel is stationed at each gate, that that access is to be subject to conditions, and regulated by an exalted order assigned to that office.

The twelve tribes of the sons of Israel are the symbols in the vision of the sealing of all the branches or families of pure worshippers. The inscription of the names of those tribes on the gates, denotes, accordingly, that all branches of the unglorified race are to have access to the glorified saints, but each with a part or division peculiarly appropriated to themselves ; as in a walled city inhabited by different tribes, the inscription on separate gates of the names of the several tribes, would imply that each tribe was to pass through the gate distinguished by its name.

In the temple in Jerusalem, the mercy-seat, the symbol of the throne of God in the scene of the visible displays of his presence, was in the holy of holies wholly withdrawn from the sight of the worshippers, and beheld only by the high priest, once a year. That there is no temple in the new Jerusalem, denotes, therefore, that the presence of the Redeemer is to be visible to the worshippers at large, not, as under the Mosaic dispensation, veiled from their sight.

As the sun and moon are symbols of the supreme legislative and executive rulers in a state, that the city has no need of the sun nor the moon that they may enlighten it, for the glory of God

enlightens it, and its lamp is the Lamb, denotes that it is to have no need that the unglorified or glorified saints should make laws for it, as God is to be its lawgiver, and Christ is to supply it with all the commands and counsels its exigences are to require.

That the nations are to walk by its light, signifies that they are to be guided by the teachings which Christ communicates to the glorified saints. That the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it, implies that the chiefs of the nations are to exercise their office in perfect subordination to the saints whom it symbolizes, and employ themselves in subserving the ends which they enjoin. That no one is to enter it that is unclean, or that works defilement or falsehood, indicates that sanctification is requisite in order to that relation to the glorified which admission to its gates denotes, and thence as all nations are to walk in its light, that the race is universally to be holy.

The river of the water of life, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb, is the symbol, doubtless, of the renewing and sanctifying influences by which the nations are to be imbued with spiritual life. The leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations, symbolize the means of their restoration from mortality; and the fruit of that tree, the pledge of their transfiguration to glory; for there shall be no curse any more. Every individual is to be perfectly redeemed from the dominion of sin, and freed from its penalty. That the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and that his servants, by whom are meant the nations that are healed, not the glorified saints whom the city symbolizes, shall serve him, and shall see his face, indicates that they are to yield a perfect submission to his authority, and to enjoy his visible presence.

That his name is on their foreheads, implies that they are to exhibit the clearest evidence that they are truly his children. And finally, that they are to have no need of light of lamp nor light of sun, but that the Lord God shall shine on them, as he manifests his presence to the glorified saints, and that they shall reign forever and ever, denote that they also are at length to have no need of any teacher but God, and are to be transfigured therefore to glory, like those who have been raised from death and exalted to the stations of kings and priests in his kingdom.

SECTION LX.

CHAPTER XXII. 6-21.

FINAL COMMANDS AND WARNINGS.

AND he said to me, These words are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show to his servants what must come to pass in a short time. And behold I come quickly. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. And I am John who heard and saw these things; and when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, See thou do it not. I am a fellow-servant of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God. And he said to me, Thou mayest not seal the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is near; he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is defiled, let him be defiled still; and he that is righteous, let him work righteousness still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Behold, I come quickly, and my reward [is] with me to retribute to every one as his work shall be. I am the Alpha and the Omega, first and last, the beginning and the end.

Blessed are they who do his commands, that the right may be theirs to the tree of life, and that they may enter through the gates into the city. The dogs are without, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood.

I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And he who hears let him say, come; and he who thirsts, let him come; he who will, let him take the water of life freely.

I testify to every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if any one add to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book. And if any one take from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take his part from the tree of life and from the holy city which are written in this book. He who testifies these things says, Yea, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints.

That the words of the prophecy are faithful and true, denotes that they exhibit a true representation of the purposes of God,

and of the actors and events of which the world was soon to become the scene, and are to be perfectly verified.

The things that were soon to be, are the whole train of agencies foreshown in the visions, considered as one series or act, and were nigh, inasmuch as the commencement of the series was near; in the same manner as the agencies of a war and other vast successions of events that sustain an intimate relation to each other, are spoken of as one, and said to be nigh events and periods that precede them, when the first of the succession is near those events or periods.

The homage which the apostle was about to pay to the angel, was probably not of adoration, but of gratitude merely, for his condescension and benignity in showing him the great things which were soon to be, and especially the grandeurs of the reign of the glorified saints with Christ. It indicates a fervid sense of the significance of the visions he had beheld, the vastness and glory of the Redeemer's designs, the splendor of the destiny assigned the redeemed, and the beauty and blessedness to which the nations are to be exalted under his sway. The angel exhibits in his reply the spirit of the true worshippers, in contrast with the usurpers of the rights of God and their idolatrous vassals. It was God who appointed him to that work, not himself, and in fulfilling it, he acted in the same relations to him as a servant, in which the apostle himself, the prophets, and they who keep the words of the book were called to act, in fulfilling their office as his witnesses.

The injunction, thou must not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near; he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; is addressed to the prophet, doubtless, as the representative of the witnesses of God of all ages: and its import is, Thou must not withhold from the church nor misrepresent the revelation of this book, but proclaim it in its truth, representing those as unjust whom the prophecy exhibits as unjust, and those as defiled, whom the prophecy represents as defiled, and those as righteous and holy to whom it ascribes that character. The Redeemer enforces this injunction by the annunciation of his deity and title to implicit obedience, and the assurance that he is to come quickly, to retribute to every one as his work shall be.

The benediction which is next pronounced on those who obey his commands, is a benediction of those who are to live under his reign after the establishment of the kingdom of the glorified saints on earth, manifestly from the representation that they are to acquire by their obedience a title to the tree of life, and an entrance

through the gates into the city. They are to follow the descent of that city, therefore, not to precede it, and to be of those who enter and dwell within it, not of those who constitute the city itself. They are to include the whole race, inasmuch as all others, the dogs, the sorcerers, the fornicators, the murderers, the idolaters, and whoever loves and practices falsehood, are to be excluded ; and, as the city is to open its gates to all nations, to be banished from the earth.

The annunciation that he who sent his angel to testify these things to the churches, is Jesus, the Messiah promised to the ancient prophets, that the Spirit and the bride say, come, and that whoever hears is to say, come, is marked by a beauty and grandeur of meaning scarcely surpassed in any other passage of the book. As the saints, who are the bride, do not in their intermediate state, address men, the invitation they utter is to be referred to their reign with Christ on earth, when they are to exercise the office of kings and priests. The passage indicates an agency, therefore, they are to exert throughout the interminable ages of redemption. The Root and the Offspring of David, the bright, the morning Star, is the incarnate Word, who is to reign and carry on the work of salvation forever and ever. The Spirit is to continue his renewing and sanctifying influence, and say to the sons and daughters of the race, as they are summoned from age to age into existence, Come. The raised and transfigured saints are to repeat the call through the flight of everlasting years, and the unglorified also, and every breast be filled and transported with a sense of the infinitude and freeness of the Saviour's grace.

The terrific threat to those who add to the prophecy, or take from it, indicates that men are to be under violent temptation to reject or misrepresent it in order to evade the application of its predictions to themselves. And how needful to presumption, to party zeal, and to ambition, is the restraint it is suited to impose ! With what a perverse and daring spirit have not a few, especially of the friends of the nationalized hierarchies, set aside the obvious meaning of its symbols, and forced on them constructions the most unauthorized and unnatural, in order to escape the demonstration that the great apostate powers which it foreshadows, are those to which they belong !

CONCLUSION.

I. ONE of the most conspicuous characteristics of the prophecy thus is, that it exhibits the true worshippers as perpetually involved, until the advent of Christ, in a violent conflict with antagonist powers. It is made a question throughout the whole period, Who shall reign? Who has the chief right of dominion over men? Whom shall they honor as of supreme authority? Christ claims exclusive homage on the ground of his deity, and work as Redeemer; and makes known his purpose to maintain his rights, and reward men with life or death eternal according as they acknowledge and obey him, or refuse subjection to his sway; and forewarns them that they are to be called to a severe test of their allegiance.

On the other hand, a long succession of antagonist powers dispute his rights, usurp his throne, and endeavor to compel men to make their homage of him, subordinate to their homage of themselves. The pagan rulers of the ancient empire deny his deity, and assert the divinity of their idols; and arrogating authority to dictate to their subjects whom they shall worship and with what rites, forbid the homage of him, and enjoin instead the worship of their false gods. Their successors in the ancient and modern empire, nominally acknowledge his deity and right to reign, but deny it practically, by claiming dominion over the faith and worship of their people, making his laws the subject of their legislation, and thence treating his rights as depending on their will. In like manner the teachers of the church usurp authority over his laws, arrogate an exclusive right to teach and offer a worship, and endeavor in conjunction with the civil rulers, to compel men to submit to their sway. They thus dethrone God as the object of homage, set aside the eternal Word as Redeemer, and substitute creatures and idols in their place; and by their influence the church at large is drawn into apostasy. The true worshippers are reduced to a small number, called to maintain allegiance under the greatest difficulties, and to give by the surrender of ease, property, friends, and life itself, the most decisive and conspicuous proofs of invincible fidelity. The whole host who are redeemed during this period, ascend to heaven out of great tribulation, and are crowned as victors over mighty foes.

II. This conflict is conducted in the presence of the redeemed in heaven and the angels, and engages their profoundest attention

They were spectators of its symbolization in the visions, and then made acquainted doubtless, in a far higher degree than we are, with its nature and design; and they are represented as aware at its great epochs of its progress. They are exhibited as offering symbols in the divine presence of the prayers of the saints for deliverance from their heathen persecutors, and as casting fire to the earth in token of the avenging judgments which were soon to descend on those apostate powers; and their voices are heard hymning the Almighty at the commencement of the judgment, and at the final overthrow of the wild beast and false prophet; indicating that they are witnesses of this dispensation, and that it is conducted with a reference to them.

III. The usurpation of his empire by his enemies through so vast a period, and persecution of his worshippers, is allowed for reasons of wisdom and benignity. It was perhaps at first unexpected to all creatures, and wrapped in clouds and darkness, and to men has ever been a mystery. Instead of comprehending it, or notwithstanding its difficulties, still adoring and trusting him as all-wise and all-good, they have often drawn from it conclusions adverse to his perfections, and against his existence; some ascribing it to a want of power to control his moral creatures, and accomplish his wishes; and some to a want of benevolence; some interpreting it as the offspring of a preference of rebellion to obedience; and others as a proof that no self-existent and independent being sways the sceptre of the universe. But the celebrations of the heavenly hosts show, that they regard it as founded on reasons worthy of the Supreme, forming a dazzling display of his perfections, and destined to subserve his glory and the well-being of his kingdom throughout his everlasting reign; and those reasons, and the mode in which it is to exert that influence, are in a degree unfolded in the prophecy. It is exhibited as introductory to another and widely different dispensation, which is to last through eternal ages, and a preparation for it by the displays which it presents of the rights of God, the character of man, the reality of their reconciliation whom he pardons, and an exemplification of all the great truths on which the work of redemption proceeds. When the great tragedy draws to a close, the heavenly hosts give thanks that he has thus reigned as a sovereign, and represent it as the result of his administration that the salvation of the redeemed is seen to be wholly of him. "We thank thee," they sing, "O Lord the Almighty God, who is and who was, that thou hast assumed thy great power and reigned; and the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time

of the dead to judge and give the reward to thy servants," chap. xi. 17, 18. "Halleluia! the salvation, and the glory, and the power, are of our God, for true and righteous are his judgments," chap. xix. 1, 2. The redeemed who go out of the great tribulation, on their resurrection and assumption to heaven, exclaim, "The salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb;" and the angelic hosts respond, "The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanks, and the honor, and the dominion, and the might to our God forever and ever," chap. vii. 10-12. They see in the displays of this long succession of ages, vast and resistless demonstrations that the salvation which he bestows, is indeed such as he represents it;—a salvation of enemies; a salvation from merited death; a salvation which required as its ground the expiatory sacrifice of the incarnate Word; a salvation devised by boundless wisdom, accomplished by almighty power, conferred in infinite grace, and conducted in a manner to maintain his rights unimpaired, and show forth his rectitude in its unclouded splendor. And such are obviously the convictions to which the spectacle is adapted to give birth. It presents a vast demonstration that men are truly the enemies of God, and that the power alone of the almighty Spirit is adequate to renew them to obedience. It presents a full and sublime demonstration that those whom he forgives and saves, are truly reconciled to him, and meet for admission to his kingdom. Probably no others of his obedient subjects give such decisive and stupendous proofs of invincible fidelity, as those who maintain allegiance amidst the trials of this period, especially the temptations of persecution and martyrdom. It exemplifies in a most emphatic manner the right of God to leave men to rebel and perish, notwithstanding the interposition of the Saviour; and the sovereignty in which he confers salvation on those whom he renews and pardons. It exhibits in an awful form, the depth of alienation and ruin to which they sink who revolt; the total inadequacy of law, of forbearance, of love, of rebukes, of all secondary agencies to recall them to obedient affections, and shows thereby how hopeless of reformation revolted beings would be without a Saviour and sanctifier. It demonstrates the inflexible purpose of God to maintain his prerogatives over his revolted subjects, and grant salvation to none but those who return to obedience, acknowledge his rights and their desert of destruction, and accept the salvation proffered by Christ as a free gift. It demonstrates the hopelessness of all attempts by his enemies to escape from his dominion, to gain happiness without him, to

overturn his throne, to sully his rectitude, to baffle his wisdom, or in the least intercept him from the attainment of the ends at which he aims; and shows that they who refuse to honor him by obedience, are yet to be compelled, however reluctant, to subserve his glory in their alienation.

The knowledge of these great truths is obviously necessary, in order to a just appreciation of the work of redemption; and their exemplification by an administration, the proper means of that knowledge. No other method could carry them with equal certainty and strength to the conviction of the infinite multitudes of the universe: no other could raise the redeemed to such a realization of them. Had God restored our first parents to perfect holiness the moment after their fall, and renewed each of their posterity instantly after the first act of rebellion, maintained them ever after in obedience, and exempted them wholly from punishment, no proof, except his testimony, would have existed to the universe that they were sinners. No exemplifications would have been presented of the condition to which rebels naturally sink, of his rights over them, of the inadequacy of law to maintain them in rectitude, or of the necessity of an expiation by the eternal Word in order to their pardon. His whole government over them would have been an enigma, and naturally led to the most dangerous conclusions respecting his rights, his rectitude, and his wisdom. An exemplification of all the great truths on which he proceeds, on so vast a scale as to present an absolute and irresistible demonstration of them to the whole universe, and in a form by which they should ever be present, was doubtless indispensable therefore to the possibility of redemption, consistently with his glory and the safety of his empire. That demonstration will be formed by the trial of six thousand years, in which a full exhibition is made of what man is, in all the possible conditions of life; a full manifestation of the attributes, the rights, and the purposes of God; and a vast and glorious exemplification of the reality of their reconciliation to him and fitness for his presence, whom he raises to his kingdom; and the way prepared for his then bestowing salvation on the whole race through a long succession of ages; not only without exposing himself to misconstruction, and endangering his holy subjects; but in such a manner as eminently to display the grandeur of his wisdom, power, and love; and subserve in a degree worthy of his infinite attributes, the intelligence, the virtue, the happiness, and the stability of his kingdom.

IV. When the powers who usurp his empire have reached the

end of the career which his sovereignty allows them, Christ is to interpose, and by tremendous judgments refute their pretence to rights above his, vindicate himself from their blasphemies, and prepare the way at length for their destruction. And at that crisis the discrimination of the true worshippers from the anti-christian powers is to become more marked, and the contest between them to rise to greater violence. On the one hand, the people of God are to separate themselves publicly from the apostate hierarchies, and wholly refuse submission to the usurped dominion over them of the civil rulers; and on the other, the civil rulers are to endeavor to crush them by persecution, and to slaughter them in such numbers as to presume that their aim is accomplished. But at that dread epoch the Son of God is publicly to raise his martyred witnesses from death, and assume them to heaven, and by those great acts show that they are his true worshippers. And at a later period, when the antichristian powers have renewed the persecution of his people, is again visibly to interpose, and by the resurrection and assumption to heaven of all his saints, and the destruction of the apostate rulers and their vassals that are openly arrayed against him, present to all the survivors of the race overwhelming proofs that they who had so long claimed to be his vicegerents, and arrogated dominion over his laws, were his enemies, and thus prepare the way for their acknowledging him as their God and King.

V. Though this great process of judgment has already commenced, the first five vials already been showered on the nations, and the sixth begun to descend, yet the train of great events which is still to precede the advent of the Redeemer, is such as must naturally occupy many years;—a fuller proclamation of the gospel to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, and warning of his approaching judgments; the sealing of the servants of God; the tempests of commotion and revolution that are to follow the excitement of the winds after their sealing is completed; the persecution and slaughter of the witnesses; their resurrection; the revolutions that are to follow their resurrection and assumption to heaven; the fall of the apostate hierarchies from their stations as national establishments; the summons after their fall of the people of God to come out of them; another and last persecution; and the procedure of the unclean spirits from the dragon, wild beast, and false prophet, to gather the kings together to battle against God.

VI. Political agitations and revolutions through the whole circle of the earth, are also to follow the seventh trumpet, and

doubtless the resurrection of the saints, that must naturally occupy a considerable period anterior to the final destruction of the antichristian powers at the great battle of God. That destruction is to extend only to the usurping civil rulers, the apostate hierarchies, and their armies; not to the nations at large over whom they have exercised their sway. They who are then to be cast alive into the lake of fire, are the antichristian rulers of the political kingdoms of the western empire, and the apostate ecclesiastics of the papal state; and they who are to be slain, the other kings of the earth and their armies. There are no indications that any are to be destroyed at that epoch but those who are in open and organized array against the Messiah. The harvest of the saints is probably to follow that battle, and constitute a public discrimination and acknowledgment of all the truly sanctified who survive on the earth, as the children of God; and is doubtless the separation and judgment of the sheep. The vintage is to take place at a still later period, and is to constitute the judgment and condemnation of those who have approved and sustained the antichristian powers in their war on God; not the race at large; and is probably the same as the judgment of the goats. There is thus to be a public revision of Christ's administration, and of the conduct of those who have acted in immediate relation to him, during the persecution of the witnesses and his judgments on the antichristian powers; and the race at large, prepared by the demonstration of his rights and righteousness, for submission to his sway.

When all the antichristian powers and their supporters have thus been destroyed, Satan and his legions are to be cast into their prison, and restrained during the Redeemer's millennial reign, from tempting the nations.

VII. At length the incarnate Word is to descend and establish his throne on the earth, as King of kings, and Lord of lords. The glorified saints are to enjoy stations in his kingdom as princes and priests, suited to the grandeur of their faculties, the vastness of their knowledge, and the beauty of their rectitude; and to make displays of wisdom, virtue, and love, that shall show them to be fitted for the relations to which he exalts them. All nations and all individuals are to be sanctified and freed from exhausting toil, suffering, sorrow, and death; the earth converted into a paradise of righteousness, blessedness, and life, and infinite proofs thus given of its fitness to be the abode of a holy and happy race. The saints living at his advent, are, probably after his kingdom has thus become established, to be transfigured, and united with

those raised from death ; and that is the mode in which the generations of the race are thereafter to be glorified. Not only are the raised and transfigured to enjoy the visible presence of the Redeemer, but the unglorified nations also are to behold him, bend at his throne, and meet his smile.

VIII. When he has thus reigned through the vast tract of ages, denoted by the millennium, Satan and his legions are again to be released, allowed to renew the seduction of men, and for a short period to draw a portion of them into apostasy, and attempt to usurp the dominion of the world, and show thereby, both that their thirst of evil remains unquenched, and that men, though in conditions most propitious to their obedience, yet when left by the Spirit, and assailed by temptation, instantly, as in earlier ages, revolt ; and thence renew the demonstration that their salvation who are redeemed, is wholly of God. They are speedily, however, to be arrested in their rebellion, and dashed by the Redeemer to destruction.

IX. Satan and his hosts having thus manifested their unaltered enmity, and shown the danger of their being allowed access to other orders of beings, are then to be consigned to the abyss of darkness throughout their immortal existence ; and infinite demonstrations having been made during the millennium, of the righteousness and benevolence of his reign whom they refused to obey, of the virtue and happiness of which they were capable, and of their persistence in rebellion, the unholy dead are then also to be raised from the grave, publicly judged, and consigned to eternal punishment.

X. Men are thereafter to continue obedient through everlasting years, and swell to numbers as vast as would have descended from the first pair throughout eternal ages, had they never revolted.

How infinite are the designs of the Redeemer ! How worthy of him the results that are to spring from his interposition ! How sublime the destiny of his people ! Come, Lord Jesus.

THE END

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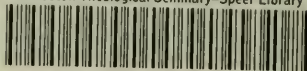
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